

# HEADED BACK TO WORK? PREPARE YOUR PETS

## Need More Help?

Find additional resources at  
[pasadenahumane.org/behavior](https://pasadenahumane.org/behavior).

Our pets thrive on routine, and any change – small or large – may affect their behavior. Help ease the transition for you and your pets with these tips:

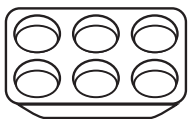
### Settle into a new routine gradually *before you head back to work.*

- **Go slowly.** Change things one step at a time. With a slow approach, you lower your pet's stress level and prevent separation-related behavior issues.
- **One change at a time.** Start with just one thing that's easy for you to do at the same time each day. This can be waking up to feed your pet at the same time each morning or an evening play session.
- **Build up to the full routine.** Slowly begin adding more events to the routine at your own pace. Make sure your pet's new routine includes set meal times, play sessions, mental enrichment and physical exercise. The new routine should easily fit into your office life schedule.
- **Alone time is key.** Slowly add some alone time to your new routine throughout the day. Leave your pet with some fun and safe things to chew on or play with before you go. You can begin by taking 5-minute breaks in the garden or going for a quick walk around the block without your pet. When leaving for a break, don't make a big fuss and keep your greetings brief upon your return.
- **Keep what works.** It might be tempting to jump back in to your old routine, but take a moment to assess if it was really working for you and your pets in the first place. Make a note of special things you have enjoyed about being home with your pet and incorporate those things into your new daily routine.

### Recognize stress and boredom

One of the most common signs your pet is stressed or bored is destructive behavior, like chewing the sofa, digging through the trash, or knocking over your favorite coffee mug. You may feel like your dog or cat is punishing you for leaving them alone, but from your pet's point of view, they're just releasing some stress. Resist the urge to scold your pet for unwanted behaviors. Instead, provide them with an appropriate outlet for their needs.

Behind every naughty behavior is an animal's need to fulfill a natural instinct. Here are some enrichment ideas that can help satisfy your pet's need to "hunt," scratch, forage and play.



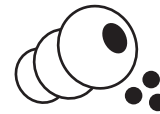
Egg carton



Food puzzles



Scratching pad



Kong toys



Tug toys

More enrichment ideas: [foodpuzzlesforcats.com](https://foodpuzzlesforcats.com)

We are always here to help! You can find additional behavior and training resources at [pasadenahumane.org/behavior](https://pasadenahumane.org/behavior).



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