

Having Pets in Shanghai Without B S

Volume IV of the soon-to-be-acclaimed (or despised) “Shanghai Without B.S.” guides by Love Box Self Storage

Having a pet can enhance your living experience in Shanghai. Studies have shown that having a pet can help reduce stress levels (which most Shanghai expats can appreciate!). There are great joys that come with being a pet owner. There are also great responsibilities of which to be aware.

This guide is a bit lengthy, so here’s a table of contents:

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Importing Your Dog or Cat

You’ll be happy to learn that importing your dog or cat into China from your home country is actually a fairly straight-forward process. More and more expats are now finding it easier to bring their beloved pets with them to Shanghai.

However, before you book your pet’s flight, you’ll need to do a bit of research on your end to find out the specific animal export/importation policies for your home country. Be sure to be thorough in your research though. Some countries allow you to take your pets out but prohibit you from bringing them back in again! For example, it is impossible to import any animals from China into Australia, although you can export animals from Australia to China.

There are a couple of companies in Shanghai that specialize in pet importation/exportation services. We recommend using **Jialiang** (www.jialiang.com). This is how our dog **Mooshu** got into China. Along with a full menu of pet-related services, they have been performing animal importation for several years now and have a good reputation for this type of service. In addition, some relocation companies may also provide this service as part of their overall relocation package.



We recommend going with one of these services because they can better ensure that all of the necessary paperwork is completed. They're especially useful if you don't read and write Chinese. The importation companies can also save a lot of headache and stress because they oftentimes have relationships with the appropriate officials at the [Plant & Quarantine](#) office at the airport who can help to make your arrival process smoother.

You have the option of either transporting your pet as excess baggage, or as cargo. If personally handling your pet's transport, upon arrival you can go straight to the airport [Plant & Quarantine](#) office (or meet your agent there) and have your pet processed immediately. The entire process can take as short as an hour depending on how well your documentation is completed and whether there is a queue when you arrive.

To find information on importing your pet, you can go to the website for the **Second Chance Animal Aid** organization (www.scaashanghai.org). SCAA is a non-profit organization committed to protecting and improving the health of dogs and cats that have been abandoned through education and adoption programs. It was originally started in Shanghai over three years ago and continues to be actively managed by a staff of fully-dedicated volunteers.

Below are the general steps involved in bringing your pet with you:

- 1) Present a valid passport for each pet - (only one pet is allowed per passport).
- 2) Book your and your pet's flights (this must be done at the same time). Also, make sure you have a pet carrier/cage that will be approved by the airline. Some airlines have specific rules on the type of carrier you can use (such as pets must be able to stand on all legs, turnaround, and still have clearance on top).
- 3) There are two specific types of documentation that you must have with you upon arrival:
 - o **Rabies vaccination records** – you get this from your vet
 - o **International Health Certificate** – usually issued by your country's agricultural department/agency
- 4) You'll need to have **2000 RMB** in cash with you upon arrival.
- 5) If personally handling your pet's transport then go directly to the [Plant & Quarantine](#) office upon arrival (it will be one of the small rooms just opposite one of the baggage carousels). If you have hired a service, there should be an assigned agent waiting for you near the baggage area to escort you to the office. Again in this case, you may be better off using a pet relo firm to help you through the processing at the Plant & Quarantine office especially if you don't have someone traveling with you who speaks Chinese.



There is a **30-day quarantine period for dogs** (cats aren't required to be quarantined). The first seven days are mandatory quarantine (as of 2007). The quarantine facility is located in Qing Pu district. If after seven days the dog's health has been approved, they can then be transferred to your home to spend the rest of the 23 days in "at home" quarantine. However, during this time they are technically not allowed to be outside. At the end of the 30 days, the Plant & Quarantine agency will send an inspector to come to your home to complete the final processing for your dog. For contact information for the Plant & Quarantine offices in Shanghai, [click here](#).

If you are importing your dog, the next step after getting approval from the Plant & Quarantine is to [obtain a dog license](#).

Adopting – Saving a Life

Adopting a pet can be a most rewarding experience. In Shanghai, there are plenty of dogs and cats in need of a loving home. Although some may still prefer to adopt a full breed over a mixed breed, studies have shown that mixed breeds on average have fewer health problems than purebreds, are generally more intelligent, and in the end may cost you less in healthcare costs.

If you're interested in adopting a pet, we highly recommend contacting one of the following:

- **Second Chance Animal Aid** (www.scaashanghai.org) – SCAA runs a successful adoption program for both rescued dogs and cats. All the animals at SCAA have received proper vaccinations and through a partnership with PAW Veterinary Clinic, they will cover the cost of getting the animal neutered or spayed. You can contact SCAA directly if you are interested in participating in their foster care program.
- **St. Anthony Animal Recovery Hospital** (www.saarh.cn) takes in rescued cats and Dr. Stephanie Goltz always tries her best to adopt them out. The cats are all healthy and waiting to be adopted into a loving home.

If you do decide to adopt a dog, please be sure to [get a dog license](#).

Pet Stores and Breeders in China

Pet Stores in China are usually awful places to get a pet. In fact, pet stores in Shanghai have been known to engage in some shady practices such as not giving proper vaccinations or even worse, presenting fake vaccination records. In addition, local pet stores often purchase their animals from cruel "puppy/kitty mills" where they are not properly cared for and methods are used only to achieve the appearance of being healthy. The mothers are kept in a constant state of pregnancy. Many of the animals are weak and sick and easily susceptible to diseases and health problems that can turn fatal.



Breeders are becoming more popular these days. However, the industry is still in its infancy and there are not yet standards or formal systems in place for accurately tracking the pedigree information for a particular dog. **Naughty Pet** in Hongqiao offers breeder services. However, we do not have much information on the experience and quality of their services.

One guideline to keep in mind is to make sure the puppy is not too young. Generally, puppies should be **at least 2-4 months old** before you take them home. That way, you can better judge whether they are in good health.

Dr. Stephanie Goltz from [St. Anthony Animal Recovery Hospital](#) recommends that when considering a breeder, it is best to get referrals through a trusted clinic. "Good breeders tend to only work with 1-2 breeds so beware of the breeder who seems to offer everything on the menu".

Next Step – The Dog License

Cats are not required to have a license in Shanghai. Dogs, however, are. The license fee for a dog in Shanghai is 2000 RMB in the city, 1000 RMB outside of the Inner Ring Road and only 100 RMB for outside the Outer Ring Road. The license is valid for one year, after which you must reapply for a renewal of the license and pay the license fee again.

In rural parts of China, rabies is a real problem. Seemingly unfairly, authorities in Shanghai and other major cities are at times very aggressive in pursuing unlicensed dogs. Having a dog license means that the dog has been vaccinated against rabies (and that the owner has paid the hefty annual fee). The dog catchers can be very brazen and stern. If an owner does not have the dog license on them at the moment they're confronted by a dog catcher, the dog is often taken. When a dog is taken, the owner is almost guaranteed never to get him or her back. In many cases, the dog catcher will not even allow the owner to go upstairs to fetch the license. There have been well-publicized roundups of unlicensed dogs in expat compounds. In 2008, the management at Yanlord Gardens in Pudong rolled out the red carpet for the dog catchers, who apparently had a banner day. **Thus, it is vital to get your dog licensed and take it with your dog at all times!**

Fortunately, the dog license application process has improved over the years and is now a fairly straight forward process once you confirm the list of requirements, paperwork to complete and where to go to submit them. However, in the past, it was not uncommon to find different requirements from one district to another (we learned this from personal experience). The completed paperwork should be taken to the designated police station in your district that is responsible for the handling of dog license applications. Oftentimes, there are special hours for processing dog license applications, so call ahead before you go there. You'll be directed to the specific person in charge of the dog license department. Note though that you won't find anyone there who speaks English, so it's best to bring along a Chinese friend or colleague to help translate.



Below are the **basic requirements for applying for a dog license in Shanghai.**

- 1) A completed Dog License application form [[download here](#)]. Note that if you are renting an apartment in a compound, you are required to get the management company to chop the application form.
- 2) Dog owner's Passport
- 3) Your apartment lease (if you're renting) or proof of ownership
- 4) One 1" color photo of the owner and one 3" color photo of the dog (where the whole body is visible in photo)
- 5) Proof of work/business in Shanghai

If someone else is applying on your behalf, a written authorization and the ID of the representative are required.

Note that foreigners can only get the permit if they are staying in Shanghai for more than one year. **It normally takes 10 days to process the application after all forms have been submitted.**

For your convenience, we have the following documents available for download to help make the dog license process as painless (and B.S.-free) as possible:

- We have the **Shanghai dog license application form** available for you to download in both [Chinese](#) and [English](#). Please note that the English dog license application form is just for your reference only since it shows the English translation for each of the form fields. You'll need to complete the Chinese dog license application form. It's best to have a friend or colleague who can read and write Chinese to help you fill it out.
- For a list of all of the police stations in each district who are responsible for processing dog license applications including addresses and phone numbers, [click here](#).

For your reference, the following is the relevant website for information on the dog license application process. However, you'll have to get a Chinese friend to translate for you as it's only in Chinese:

http://gaj.sh.gov.cn/shga/qweb/xxnr_view.jsp?pa=409d87abeb336b8321c710c6a07643da67862c1c437d185c68ba45f9dfa131a1098a43e227ba0dfc64237e10a0510f7e42f68583cdc5fad885f48a5499e5720c

So there you have it – getting a dog license isn't as hard as you would think. However, if you still feel that you need assistance, there is help available. **Pet-in-Shanghai**



(www.petinshanghai.com) offers assistance with the dog license application process. You can contact **Sabrina Feng** directly at **137 6146 7251** for more details.

Maintaining Your Pet's Health

There are several pet clinics around town, some operated by foreign professional and some locally operated by Chinese medical professionals. Since pet ownership is a fairly new trend in China, standards of care can sometimes vary greatly with the local clinics. We recommend that as a foreigner you will save a lot of headaches by dealing with a foreign-operated clinic.

We have heard good things about **Shanghai Muyi Pet Hospital** in Gubei (855 Hongjing Road, Lane 30, Changning District, 6268 0095, www.shmynet.com). Dr. Gong is actively involved with the folks at Jaiya's Animal Rescue (JAR) Group and donates a lot of his time and resources to helping their cause. Dr. Gong is also a government-approved vet and comes highly recommended by many foreigners and local Chinese (who say that his services are both affordable and professional). Their clinic is clean and the staff are very helpful. You can contact Dr. Gong directly at **135 0170 8695**.

Our favorite vet is still **Dr. Stephanie Goltz** (our four cats and one dog are all patients of Stephanie's). Stephanie has been in Shanghai for over 5 years now and has extensive experience working with several major animal care operations in Shanghai. She is extremely caring for her patients and maintains a wonderful relationship with her clientele. We highly recommend Dr. Goltz for all of your pet's healthcare needs – both in an emergency and also for general health check-ups.

RECENTLY UPDATED (as of March 2010)

Stephanie was previously with St. Anthony Animal Recovery Hospital in Hongqiao. However, as of March 2010 she is no longer with St. Anthony. The hospital has changed ownership and we have since received negative feedback on the competency of their doctors.

Therefore, Love Box can no longer recommend St. Anthony. Dr. Stephanie is currently in the process of setting up a new hospital that she hopes will be coming online by Summer 2010. We will be sure to update our guide once the new hospital is up and running. In the meantime, if you'd like to contact Stephanie directly, you can email her at **sgoltz@gmx.com**.

We cannot stress enough the importance of getting your puppy/kitty spayed or neutered. Not only does this prevent overpopulation of unwanted puppies and kitties but it is just better for their health as a whole – both physically and mentally.

Male Dogs/Cats

Male dogs/cats that are neutered often behave better than male dogs/cats that have not been neutered. They are less likely to want to roam off and also tend to have better temperaments.

Male dogs that have not been neutered oftentimes have very aggressive personalities that can get them into a lot of trouble (especially in Shanghai where most local Chinese tend to have a fear of dogs). Neutering also prevents the development of prostate problems as well as testicular cancer in dogs.

Male cats that are neutered are less likely to:

- Contract diseases such as FeLV and FIV
- Develop testicular or mammary cancer or "stud tail" (which is caused by overactive glands in the tail)
- Develop allergies

Male dogs should be neutered between the ages of **9 months to 12 months**. Male cats should be neutered between the ages of **6 months to 9 months**.

Female Dogs/Cats

Female dogs/cats that are spayed will have far less chance of developing mammary cancer compared to other female dogs/cats that have already experienced their first heat cycle. Spayed female dogs/cats can't develop *pyometra* (which is an infection in the uterus that can become fatal). In addition, spaying your dog/cat eliminates their risk of getting ovarian and/or uterine cancer entirely (it's pretty basic - no organs, no cancer).

Female dog/cats should be spayed before their first heat cycle which occurs **between 6 months to 9 months**.

Pet Boarding & Grooming

If you have to leave town, don't worry. There are many boarding options available for your pet. So don't fret – your loved ones are in good hands. Some of the pet boarding services that we recommend are:

- **St. Anthony Animal Recovery Hospital** in Hongqiao (www.saarh.cn) – offers a wide range of medical services for dogs and cats including boarding and grooming. Contact **Dr. Stefanie Goltz** at **3208 2880**.
- **Paradise Kennel** in Songjiang (www.paradisekennel.com.cn) – offers dog boarding, grooming and training services. Their facility is unique because it has both indoor



and outdoor areas where dogs can have space to run off the leash. Address: No. 888 Xishe Road, Songjiang. You can contact them at **5787 8208**.

- **Pet In Shanghai** (www.petinshanghai.com) – owner and certified dog trainer, Sabrina Feng, operates a dog training school as well as offering in-home dog-sitting services so that your pets can stay in the comfort of their own home while you are away. You can reach **Sabrina** at **137 6146 7251**.
- **Bark Shanghai** in Hongqiao – An animal-loving Kiwi who offers un-caged boarding for dogs only. Grooming is also available at her shop. Address: 741 Hongxu Road. Contact **Barbara Delaney** at **5422 4457**.
- **Pets Are Wonderful (PAW) Veterinary Clinic** (www.pawvet.com) – This foreign-operated vet clinic currently offers boarding for both cats and dogs and also offers grooming services. Address: No. 15, Lane 722 Xinhua Road, near Kaixuan Road. You can contact them at **5254 0611**.

Dog Training

If you need to correct some bad behavior or just want to know how to better communicate with your dog, then you may be interested in dog training. There are a few options available in Shanghai:

- **Pet-in-Shanghai** (www.petinshanghai.com) offers a dog training program that can take place either at their training facility (where the dog receives its training while being boarded) or at-home lessons to better ensure that your dog will understand what behavior is acceptable/not acceptable at home. All training is done in English and is primarily focused on bad habit correction. Sabrina Feng, owner and certified dog trainer, understands the importance of achieving the correct relationship between dog and owner. At Pet-in-Shanghai, trainers don't believe in punishment. All training is based on positive reinforcement so as always to maintain that good relationship, based on rewards. "A dog needs to be trained from the time he is a puppy. Owners also need to know how to get the trust and respect from their dogs." Go to www.petinshanghai.com or call **Sabrina Feng** directly at **137 6146 7251** for more details.
- **Guai Gou Gou** (www.guagougou.com.cn/en/index.html) – Recommended by SCAA, G3 has a staff of UK and China trainers. They will come to your home to do the training. For more information, call **138 1833 2565**.

Buying Quality Pet Supplies in Shanghai

Pet supplies are fairly easy to find in the city. In fact, many of the larger chains of local grocery stores now carry pet food for both dogs and cats. In addition, most all of the markets targeting foreign customers carry a number of pet supplies including **City Shop**

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(www.cityshop.com.cn) and **Fresh Mart** (under the Jing An Temple/Number 2 subway station). However, prices at City Shop and Freshmart can be high.

Higher-quality products can be purchased at small local pet shops for better prices and selection (but less convenient), you can go to the former **Bird and Flower Market** on Hongqiao Lu (across the street from the Shanghai Zoo). There you can buy from a number of pet supply shops that carry a wide selection of products including imported items. Higher-quality food brands can be found there such as Royal Canin, Science Diet and Eukanuba. For greater convenience, you can go to www.vip-pet.com and order products online to have delivered right to your doorstep. However, they do tend to have higher prices and a delivery fee.

Getting out of the House – Activities in Shanghai

Unfortunately, just about all public parks in Shanghai don't allow dogs (even when they're on leashes) so there aren't a lot of options for outdoor activities that you can enjoy with your dog. The good news is that there are at least a few dog-friendly places that can get you and your dog out of the house at least for a little quality bonding time.

- **Moon River Sculpture Park** in She Shan (www.shanghai-sculpture-park.com.cn) – about a 45 minute drive (without traffic) from downtown Puxi, this lovely park offers wide open spaces for your dog to run free off the leash. There is beautiful landscaping and even a man-made beach area for swimming. The admission fee is a little steep at 80 RMB per adult and 30 RMB per pet. However, when you enter the park you can immediately understand why – the park is very well maintained and never crowded. It's actually a really nice place to go even without your dog. Just don't forget to bring snacks and water and also bags to pick up after your dog. The only downside is sometimes it can be quite empty with no other dogs for your dog to socialize with. Occasionally you'll hear about people organizing group "doggy play dates". However we have yet to hear about any events that are regularly-scheduled. You'll need to present the dog license upon entering.
- **Paradise Kennel** in Songjiang (www.paradisekennel.com.cn) – offers professional level kennel services and pet products. Their dog park area is a 13m long and 3m wide area that is fenced in where dogs can freely run and socialize off the leash. The best part is that it's free. They have a good reputation for boarding. You can call and make an appointment to visit and get a tour of their facilities.
- **O'Malley's Pub Irish Pub** (www.omalleys-shanghai.com) – this popular expat hangout is located on Taojiang road, near Hengshan Road in the French Concession. With a welcoming grass lawn and large outdoor sitting area (that is partially covered) this is a perfect place for you and your pet to go to unwind and down a few Guinness with friends.



In addition, SCAA holds monthly meetings and adoption days. Go to their website to check out their monthly schedule – www.scaashanghai.org.