

A KEEPSAKE GUIDE

Taking a Paw Print

Some people want to do this right away. Others cannot think about it for weeks, and some companions already have a print taken by a vet or hospice team without anyone asking. There is no right time for this — and it will still be here whenever you are ready, including for a future companion, if that is ever what this page becomes for you.

If your vet or in-home care team was involved

Many veterinary practices and in-home euthanasia providers include an ink or clay paw print as part of their aftercare, often at no extra cost, so it is worth asking if nobody has mentioned it. If your companion has already passed and this feels like a strange thing to ask for now, it usually is not too late — a vet or pet crematorium can sometimes still take a clay impression before cremation.

Doing it yourself

Either: air-dry clay, or a washable, acid-free ink pad and cardstock

Or, a simple salt dough: 1 cup flour, ½ cup salt, ½ cup water, mixed and kneaded until smooth

- 1 Flatten a small ball of clay to about 1cm thick on a hard surface, or set your paper down with the ink pad within easy reach.
- 2 Gently and slowly press their paw down, supporting the leg rather than the paw itself.
- 3 Lift straight up, not sideways, so the print does not smudge.

4

Let clay air dry for 24–48 hours before handling it again. An ink print just needs a few minutes flat to dry.

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Once dry, clay can be lightly sanded at the edges. An ink print can be laminated, framed, or added to their page here.

Take your time. A print is just clay, or ink, or paper. What it holds is not, so there is no need to get it perfect.