

how will I know when it's time?

FOR THE DAYS BEFORE A GOODBYE

IF YOU'RE HOLDING THIS

love them enough to listen to the hard days

Nobody tells you that loving an animal may one day mean choosing their last day. It's one of the heaviest kindnesses we're ever asked to carry. With my Delilah, I kept waiting for a clear sign. There isn't one.

What there can be is a quieter mind, an honest conversation with your vet, and a goodbye shaped by love rather than fear.

01 SIGNS THAT TIME MAY BE NEAR

trust what you see

- Eating and drinking much less, or not at all
- Sleeping most of the day, with little interest in the things they love
- Trouble standing, walking, toileting or getting comfortable
- Withdrawing, hiding away, or no longer seeking you out
- Changes in breathing, restlessness, or pain that medicine no longer eases
- More hard days than good ones, week after week

02 A KINDER QUESTION

good days / hard days

Instead of asking "is it time?", try asking "what is their life like today?". Animals live in the present. They aren't holding on for a better tomorrow. They only have today.

Some families keep a small calendar and mark each day as good or hard. When the hard days clearly outnumber the good, your answer is beginning to form.

03 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR VET

write their answers here

- ☐ What is my animal likely to feel in the coming weeks?
- ☐ What signs of pain should I watch for, and what can we do about them?
- ☐ What would a good day look like for them now?
- ☐ Is home euthanasia possible, and what does it involve?
- ☐ If we wait, what might the end look like on its own?

04 MAKING THE DAY GENTLE

small things count

- Choose their favourite place: a sunny spot, their own bed, your lap
- Keep voices soft and the house calm. Familiar smells help.
- Think about who should be there, and how to include children honestly
- Have their favourite food nearby, if they can still enjoy it
- Plan something small for afterwards: a paw print, a candle, a quiet walk

05 AFTERWARDS



Grief for an animal is real grief, and maybe the simplest kind, because the love was so simple. The house will sound different. Their bowl, their lead, the warm spot on the couch will undo you at strange moments. Let them.

Be wary of anyone who says it was "just a pet". They were family, and you're allowed to miss them for as long as you do.

NOTES

they never left your side. you won't leave theirs.

what the vet said, and anything you want to remember

06 A NOTE BEFORE YOU GO

with you in it,
carolina x

SCAN TO BOOK A
FREE CONVERSATION

This guide is a companion, not veterinary advice. Your own vet knows your animal best. And if you'd like someone beside you as you walk this, I'm an End-of-Life Doula. I offer a free 20-minute conversation, in Sydney and online across Australia. No question is too small, or too strange.

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT RIGHT NOW

After hours if your animal is in distress	Your nearest emergency vet
Grief support (SANE, incl. Griefline) Mon to Fri, 10am to 8pm	1800 187 263
Lifeline crisis support 24 hours, 7 days	13 11 14