Importing your own animal information

You can upload a bulk file of your animal data by uploading a CSV (comma-separated value) animal data file into your RescueGroups.org account.

On this page:

- Activating your FTP account
- Creating the CSV file

Activating your FTP account

You need a RescueGroups.org FTP account in order to upload the data file. We provide a free FTP account to every organization that requests one. It's easy; you just activate it.

> ✅ **Where do I find it?**
>
> From the home page of your RescueGroups.org account, go to **Services > FTP Account**. If you already activated your account, the information will display. If you haven't, you can activate it.

Creating the CSV file

Your CSV data file must have a header row and use only supported values, that is, the values we use for the RescueGroups.org data, such as animal name, breed, and so forth. You can see these fields by visiting the **Animal Import fields** chapter of this guide.

Each row (animal) in the CSV data file must have an *externalID*. The *externalID* should be a unique value that is used every time that specific unique pet is uploaded to us. The *externalID* is used by our import system to match up the animals in your data file to the animals that have already been uploaded to our system. We recommend that you develop your own unique ID methods, such as 17050301 for the year, month, day, and the consecutive number of animals in intake, 01 for the first animal of the day, or F1939 for the 1939th feline in your org, and so forth,

Please be sure to remove all line breaks (\n, \r\n, etc) from the animal descriptions. Although line breaks are officially supported by the CSV standard, we do not support them in our data files. Either remove them entirely or replace them with HTML <br> tags.

> ✅ Be sure to remove all line breaks in your descriptions and other strings. Each animal should take one and only row in the data file.

Pictures can be handled in one of two ways -- either by uploading the image files to our FTP server or by providing an Internet address (URL) where our system can download the picture. Either way, you should provide the image file name or image URL in the picture fields in the data file.

To delete an animal, simply do not include that animal in future data files. The animal will automatically be deleted. This is done by tracking each animal's externalID, which must be unique for each animal.

To import an animal data file, follow these instructions:

1. Enable your organization's FTP account. See above, **Activating your FTP account**, or see the **FTP** chapter of this guide.
2. Create an **Import Account** by going to **Animals > Imports**. See the **Using the Import Accounts feature** chapter of this guide for more information.
3. Create your data file with a header row and values as described in the **Animal Import fields** chapter in this guide.
4. Upload the data file and pictures to your FTP account. See the **Uploading data to your FTP account** section of this guide for more information.

> ✅ The RescueGroups.org animal data import runs about once an hour. Pictures are processed shortly after the data is imported. The entire process can take up to two hours.

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