

What to do when there's nothing to do

Team members: Here are some ideas for how to fill down time during your shift.

1. Check on all patients

- Ensure that all patients are clean, warm, and dry.
- Check their weight and temperature.
- Take them on potty walks.
- Give medications when due.
- Prepare medications to send home with clients.
- Ask technicians what you can help with.

2. Sort through products and supplies

Check treatment areas, pharmacy, and exam rooms:

- Check syringes and needles, heparin syringes, and catheters.
- Keep bandage trays full.
- Check stock of cotton swabs, gauze, ear cones, etc.
- Make sure solution containers and spray bottles are full.
- Fill soap dispensers and paper towel holders if necessary.

3. Clean the clinic

- Clean exam rooms.
- Wipe down every surface, including clinic doors, cabinets, countertops, drawers, shelves, floors, and cages.
- Wipe down laboratory and remove blood from centrifuges.
- Keep laundry moving.

4. Laboratory

- Clean microscope lenses of oil—use wipes and alcohol.
- Collect abandoned blood tubes—make sure they're packaged and ready to go.
- Dispose of all unneeded slides and blood and urine tubes.



5. Check the dental cart

- Verify stock of dental diet samples, oral health chews, and other product giveaways (make sure products are labeled and bagged according to size).
- Cut bandanas into three sizes (small, medium, and large) to send home with patients.

6. Replenish supplies of client handouts and forms

- Stock brochures in the waiting area.
- Make sure these documents are in the treatment area: hospital day sheets, surgery sheets, home care instructions.

7. Work with sterilization and cleaning instruments

- Clean, vacuum, and mop surgery suite.
- Clean surgical instruments.
- Put surgery packs together.
- Run autoclave.
- Ask veterinary assistants for help.

If you still have down time, ask the practice manager for more fun tasks—or you can wash walls!

Information courtesy of Brian Conrad, CVPM, practice manager for Meadow Hills Veterinary Center in Kennewick, Wash.