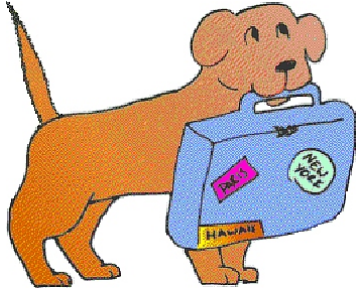


# Traveling With Your Pet

Summer and Holiday seasons turn into USDA Health Certificate Seasons at animal hospitals nationwide. If you are planning air travel with your pet, here are some things you need to know:



Travel is stressful enough without having to worry about how the pet will fare in a carrier surrounded by noise and unfamiliar people. Horror stories abound. Still, most travel disasters stem from one of three issues (all of which are readily preventable). Do not open the carrier for a final petting or hug before travel as the pet can escape. Do not use a low quality carrier that can open or break. Do get your pet used to being inside the carrier prior to travel so as to minimize anxiety. Keep in mind that brachycephalic (short-faced) dog breeds may have difficulty breathing when agitated. Proper planning makes for a fun excursion for every member of the family, even the furry ones.

## FLYING WITH YOUR PET IN THE CABIN WITH YOU

- ➔ Most airlines allow pets weighing 15 lbs or less to fly in the cabin with their owners (this weight includes both the pet and the carrier). This also means the carrier must fit under the seat in front of you. Check with the airline about the carrier size and dimensions. Most airlines sell carriers or you can buy one from a pet supply store.
- ➔ Be sure to confirm with the airline the day before travel that your pet is coming with you.
- ➔ Remember that you will need a USDA Health Certificate in most cases. Check with the airline as to how recent the certificate must be issued. The USDA considers a health certificate good for 30 days but many airlines and states have their own ideas about how long a health certificate should be valid (10 days is typical for domestic travel). Some states require special vaccinations. Travel to many foreign countries now requires special notarization of the certificate beyond the veterinarian's signature and some countries require special blood tests for entry. Always be sure to check with the consulate regarding what you need.
- ➔ Some animals may be stressed or frightened by travel. Consider tranquilizers. If your pet is traveling in the cabin with you, you may just want to have them on hand in case of unexpected anxiety.
- ➔ Service animals (animals that have been specifically trained to assist someone with a disability) generally fly for free and do not have to be confined to a carrier but they do have to be leashed or harnessed. Paperwork is necessary to attest to the animal's training and temperament and rabies vaccination must be documented. Emotional support animals are not considered service animals as of December 2020 and are not allowed in the cabin as they have been previously.

## YOUR PET AS CHECKED LUGGAGE OR MANIFEST CARGO

So what if your pet is too big for cabin travel? You can have your pet travel as checked luggage or as manifest cargo. But what is the difference? In both situations, the pet travels in a pressure and temperature controlled hold. It turns out that cargo is probably a better experience for your pet. In fact, many airlines no longer allow for pets to fly as checked luggage for reasons that will become obvious below.

## **CHECKED LUGGAGE (COULD SAVE MONEY BUT PROBABLY NOT WORTH REDUCED SAFETY)**

- ➔ Check in happens at main terminal.
- ➔ You must accompany your pet on the same flight. If you are not flying yourself, your pet will need to be in cargo. Checked luggage is not an option.
- ➔ Personnel are generally trained to handle luggage, not live animals.
- ➔ Charged as a flat fee rather than by weight which usually works out cheaper than cargo.
- ➔ Transport vehicles moving across tarmac are not required to be temperature controlled. Often these vehicles are open to the air and raw environmental temperature for unspecified time periods.

## **MANIFEST CARGO**

- ➔ Check in happens at cargo entrance.
- ➔ Personnel are trained to handle live animals and their enclosures.
- ➔ Generally more expensive and charged by weight.
- ➔ Transport vehicles are temperature controlled and protected from the environment.

Regardless of whether you choose cargo or checked luggage, each airline will have additional requirements and you will need to check with the specific airline to get most of these. For example, some airlines have maximum weight requirements. Be sure to check for any restrictions. Most states will not accept animals younger than 8 weeks of age. Such youngsters will not be allowed to travel by air. As of December 2020, airlines may not prohibit transport based on breed per se but they may have safety restrictions as for brachycephalic breeds.

Guidelines for animal shipping are set by the International Air Travel Association (IATA). These include the size of the shipping container, how it must be marked, how it is ventilated and how food and water should be made available. A copy of the guidelines can be viewed here:

[www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live-animals/Documents/pet-container-requirements.pdf](http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live-animals/Documents/pet-container-requirements.pdf)

## **YOUR PET AS CHECKED LUGGAGE OR MANIFEST CARGO**

**According to the Animal Welfare Act, there are specific temperature guidelines to which airlines must adhere.**

**Ambient temperatures in holding areas for cats and dogs must not fall below 45 degrees F for more than 4 consecutive hours.**

**Dogs and cats must not be exposed to temperatures below 45 degrees for more than 45 minutes when being moved to or from a holding areas.**

**Animals transported as carry-ons are not protected under the Animal Welfare Act, so it is up to the person carrying them to see that they do not become too cold or overheated.**

**Consider a Microchip ID for any pet that travels.**

For more details: [www.pettravel.com/passports\\_container\\_requirements.cfm](http://www.pettravel.com/passports_container_requirements.cfm)

**We wish easy travel and a pleasant journey to everyone transporting their pets.**

At the present time, Delta Airlines and United Airlines no longer accept animals as checked luggage. They must fly as cargo or in the cabin (if appropriate requirement for in-cabin travel are met).

## HELPFUL LINKS

For international destinations, each country has special requirements for animal travel. To visit For Airline Requirements for Pet Travel By Airline:

[www.pettravel.com/site-map-pet-friendly-airline-rules-regulations.cfm](http://www.pettravel.com/site-map-pet-friendly-airline-rules-regulations.cfm)

For USDA Regulations for Bringing a Pet to Another State or To a Foreign Country:

[www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pettravel](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pettravel)

For the AVMA Guidelines on travel with short-faced breeds::

[www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/Short-nosed-Dogs-and-Air-Travel-FAQs.aspx](http://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/Short-nosed-Dogs-and-Air-Travel-FAQs.aspx)

For a Pet Relocation Service:

[PetRelocation.com](http://PetRelocation.com)

For some additional information on pet travel, including a pet travel newsletter and pet travel discounts, sign up to be a member (for free) at: [www.takeyourpet.com](http://www.takeyourpet.com)

For pet friendly lodging and / or recreational activities, visit:

[www.petswelcome.com](http://www.petswelcome.com) or [www.dogfriendly.com](http://www.dogfriendly.com)

For further Air Travel Tips including a guide to In-terminal Pet Relief Stations:

[www.cheapflights.com/news/pet-travel](http://www.cheapflights.com/news/pet-travel)

For information on Frequent Flyer Points for Pet Travel:

[www.creditcards.com/credit-card-news/pets-reward-frequent-flier-miles-1263.php](http://www.creditcards.com/credit-card-news/pets-reward-frequent-flier-miles-1263.php)

For General tips on Traveling with Pets:

[www.bookmundi.com/t/tips-for-traveling-with-pets](http://www.bookmundi.com/t/tips-for-traveling-with-pets)

Please contact us if you need further information in preparation for travel.

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Information on additional pet care topics can be found on our world wide web site:

<http://www.marvistavet.com>