



Things to Know About Airline Travel

If you're planning a domestic trip with your pet that requires you to travel by plane, be aware that U.S. airlines have certain requirements that must be met before you can actually board your pet. Call your airline of choice well in advance and ask them about their requirements, which may differ slightly from others. Doing so will eliminate a lot of unnecessary stress for both you and your pet! Know the following regulations **BEFORE** you arrive at the airport:

- Rates apply for pets traveling in the cargo area and may vary according to pet weight and airline. Call your airline before booking your ticket online for specific pet rates and requirements.
- All kennels must be equipped with food and water container(s), proper ventilation, lockable door latch(s), and labels that read **"LIVE ANIMAL – This Side Up"** placed on the top and sides of the kennel.
- Dogs and cats must be at least 8-weeks old and weaned before they can travel by plane.
- Airlines require a health certificate, within 10 days of travel, ensuring your pet's good health and vaccination record (necessary for both cargo and cabin areas).
- Airlines have a one-pet-per-passenger policy.
- If an airline allows your pet into the cabin area as carry-on baggage, you must follow all carry-on baggage regulations. Pets permitted into the cabin area as carry-on baggage are not protected under the Animal Welfare Act.
- The pet container must fit under the cabin seat in front of you and must have a waterproof bottom.
- Airlines recommend that pets wear an ID tag that includes the pet's name and owner's contact information in case of an emergency.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture regulates how many animals the airlines can allow in the passenger cabin on a given flight (*an advance reservation for your pet is therefore essential*).
- The FAA requires that animals remain in their kennels at all times while on board the plane.

Tips:

- Choosing the proper size kennel for airline travel is just as important as choosing the correct size pen for home use. Your pet should have enough room to stand up, turn around and lie down comfortably.
- Choose a kennel that meets FAA's requirements for airline approval.
- Restrict your pet's food and water 4 hours before departure to minimize his/her urge to potty.
- Freeze the water so it thaws by the time your pet is thirsty but won't splash out during loading or unloading.
- Take along a few of your pet's favorite chew toys and something with your scent on it to help settle him/her.
- Line the kennel with a pee pad or towels in case of an accident.
- Consider a mid-week or late-night flight, it usually has fewer passengers.

For more informative travel tips, visit the American Kennel Club at www.akc.org or at http://www.akc.org/public_education/travel_tips.cfm .

Traveling abroad?

Most airlines and travel agencies can provide additional information about pet care requirements for international flights. For more information, see [APHIS Guide To Traveling With Your Pet](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/news/2003/05/travelingpets.html) at: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/news/2003/05/travelingpets.html>



Airlines or a full-service travel agency can provide additional information about animal care requirements for international flights.

In addition, if you are interested in acquiring information about the Animal Welfare Act, you may also write to:

**Animal Care
APHIS, USDA**

4700 River Road, Unit 84
Riverdale, MD 20737

Telephone: (301) 734-7833

E-mail: ace@usda.gov

Web page: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac>

Source: APHIS GUIDE TO TRAVELING WITH YOUR PETS

