

Traveling With Your Pet

Traveling with pets can be traumatic for all concerned, especially if preparations are not made beforehand. Here are a few suggestions for a safe and comfortable journey.

If you are flying with your pet . . . contact the airline and us ahead of time. The airlines have special rules and regulations for pets and you will need health papers filled out ahead of time. If you are traveling or moving overseas, contact us at least 6 months ahead. The paperwork involved can be a nightmare.

If you are crossing state lines . . . whether you are traveling by air or car, you will need a health certificate from us filled out within 10 days of your trip. Health certificates are required by law to help stop the spread of rabies and other diseases from state to state. Different states have different rules about the frequency of rabies vaccine administration, so your pet may need a booster shot before you leave. You should also carry a copy of your pet's rabies certificate with you. Without these papers, if you are stopped by police during your trip, you can be fined and your animal quarantined for 10 to 14 days at your expense.

Be sure your pet is wearing a collar with ID tags while traveling, in case he or she gets lost. An extra tag with the name and phone number of a friend or relative is also a good idea - remember, you won't be home to take the call if your pet is found again. Consider having a microchip or tattoo applied for permanent identification.

Always leash your pet when he is not in the car. Do not let your dog become a pest or a hazard at gas stations or rest stops. Unless you are on private property and have permission to let your dog run loose, leash him at all times at motels and camp grounds as well.

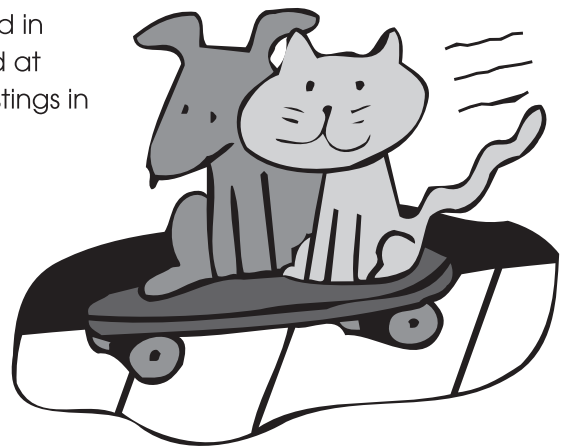
Take along plastic bags to clean up messes, and some towels in case your pet has an accident or illness in the car. Also bring your pet's bowls and its own supply of regular food and drinking water. Sudden changes of food and water, coupled with the stress of traveling, frequently lead to diarrhea. Pack a few favorite toys and a brush as well, and plenty of kitty litter for cats.

A crate is the best investment you can make for safe traveling. Ask us how to accustom your pet to the crate ahead of time if your pet hasn't used one before. (If you have recently acquired a puppy or kitten and plan to travel later on, now is the time to introduce traveling in a crate!) In a crate, your pet can relax and nap



without being a nuisance, and he will be more protected in case of an accident. You can also keep your pet crated at motels and hotels that allow pets. We have a book of listings in our office.

Be sure your pet's crate is big enough for him to stand up, turn around and lay stretched out comfortably. Keeping your dog or cat confined to a tiny cage for hours on end is cruel. Cats need enough room for a litter pan and water bowl, as well as space to lay comfortably. Bed the cage with towels so your pet isn't sliding around on bare plastic.



Your pet will need to get out and stretch his legs occasionally - every 3-4 hours for dogs and every 6-8 for cats. Be sure the leash is on before you open the car door!

NEVER LEAVE YOUR PET UNATTENDED in the car for long. Heat and cold can kill an animal left alone. Don't park in direct sunlight. If you are traveling in the summer and your car is not air conditioned, think twice before taking your pet along. Health problems or fear of strangers and unfamiliar things may also be a reason to leave your pet at home. Pug nosed breeds such as Pekingese, chow chows, Boston terriers and Persian cats are especially prone to heat stroke and suffocation while traveling.

It's best to feed your pet lightly, or not at all, before traveling. Feed your pet once you arrive at your destination or stop for the night. It's better to eat lightly for a day or two than to spend the trip carsick!

Your pet may need vaccines or medications at your destination that he doesn't need at home. For instance, fleas and heartworms are year round problems in the south, not just in the summer. If you will be hiking in the woods with your dog you may need Lyme disease vaccinations. Some pets also require sedatives or anti-nausea medications to travel comfortably. Check with us well ahead of time about these requirements.

Any more questions about traveling with
your pets? Call us at 262-375-0130

Caring People Helping Pets



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