

DIY Domestic Pet Transportation

Health Requirements

Cats and dogs flying domestically within the USA must have:

- A current rabies vaccination
- A clinical exam confirming they are "fit to fly" completed by a licensed vet within 10 days prior to travel

Other recommended vaccinations include:

- Dogs: DHPP, Bordetella, CIV, Leptospirosis
 - Cats: FVRCP
-

Document Requirements

The following documents are required to travel with your pet and should be provided to the airline at check-in:

- Original rabies vaccination certificate (signed in original ink by the vet)
- Original domestic health certificate (either signed in original ink by the vet or a printed copy of the electronically submitted certificate)

Some airlines may also require other documentation such as an acclimation certificate. An acclimation certificate may be required to be signed by your vet if the temperatures are projected to be below 45 degrees Fahrenheit at the time of travel.

Travel Kennel

If your pet is flying, they must be contained in an IATA-compliant travel kennel. You can purchase a travel kennel through Starwood from our online store, or you can purchase one on your own.

It is extremely important that you properly measure your pet to ensure you have the appropriate size kennel. If the airline deems your travel kennel too small or non-compliant then they may refuse your pet for travel.

We have a variety of resources outlining what makes a kennel compliant and how to acclimate your pet.

- [IATA-Compliant Kennels](#)
 - [How to Measure Your Pet](#)
 - [Acclimating Your Pet to the Kennel](#)
 - [How to Prepare the Travel Kennel](#)
-

Booking the Flight

Once you have ensured your pet is vaccinated for Rabies, purchased a travel kennel, acclimated your pet, and have a travel date in mind, then you can contact the airline to book your pet's flight(s). Keep in mind that not all passenger flights allow animals, so the available flight routing may not always be what you expect or hope for.

Each airline has their own rules for how pets can travel, so you will need to double check with your preferred airline. Some airlines allow smaller cats and dogs to fly in-cabin and larger animals to fly as accompanied baggage. Other airlines will not allow this and only allow some pets to fly as cargo.

- In-Cabin or Accompanied Baggage
 - This is reserved through the passenger side of the airline when you book your own flight and your pet is reserved under your own ticket and flies on the same plane as you.
- Cargo Pet Travel
 - This is reserved through the cargo side of the airline and your pet does not have to be on the same flight as you. They will have their own reservation and their flight will be tracked using the airwaybill number issued by the airline.

Preparing Your Pet For Travel

The best way to ensure your pet travels safely and comfortably, is to get them acclimated to the travel kennel well in advance. As mentioned above, you also need to make sure you have their health and documents in order prior to travel.

Day of Departure

On the day of departure, make sure you have everything you need prior to taking your pet to the airport. This includes:

- IATA-compliant travel kennel
 - Two food/water cups that latch onto the inside of the kennel door
 - Crate pad (no more than 3 inches thick)
 - Pee-pee pad (optional)
 - Thin blanket, t-shirt or towel that smells like home
 - Ziplock baggie with 2-3 servings of dry food
 - Zip ties
 - Live animal stickers
 - Original signed rabies certificate
 - Original signed domestic health certificate
 - Printed copies of both documents for you to keep on your person
 - Any other documents the airline requires
-



Embargoes

Some airlines place embargoes on pet travel depending on the aircraft, weather, and breed of pet. It's important to be mindful of any embargoes your airline has in place. Most airlines will only transport pets when the temperatures are between 45 and 85 degrees. Some airlines will not allow pets to travel if the temperatures fall outside of that range.

Some airlines also have breed restrictions where they will not allow snub-nosed breeds to travel due to the added risk involved. Examples include Pugs, Bulldogs, Shih-tzus, and Boxers.

Booking Domestic Ground Transportation

While Starwood is not offering long-distance ground transportation at this time, you can contact other local IPATA members to make these arrangements for your furry friend.

There are fewer requirements for ground transportation but it is still strongly recommended that you keep your pet up to date with their vaccinations and still obtain a domestic health certificate for travel.

Ground transportation does not require an IATA-compliant travel kennel, but many companies still require the use of some sort of restraint device or crate while pets are in the vehicle. This is for the safety and security of your pet.
