

2023



STARWOOD
PET TRAVEL



Annual State of Pet Travel



Starwood Pet Travel
info@starwoodpet.com
www.starwoodpet.com



Introduction



In an ever-evolving world, the way we live, work, and travel is constantly changing. One of the most significant shifts in recent years has been the growing importance of our beloved four-legged companions in our lives. As pets become more than just animals we care for, they become cherished members of our families. This shift in perspective has brought about a transformation in the world of travel, as pet owners seek ways to include their furry friends in their adventures.



- Almost 1 in 5 households got a cat or dog since the beginning of the pandemic
- In 2021 - 256,114 animals traveled by air in the US
- We've had over 30,000 quote requests this year

Learn more about the trends we have seen in the pet travel industry and how we can adapt and grow along with these changes.

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Industry Changes

In recent years, pet travel has undergone significant changes, making it essential for pet owners to stay informed about the latest updates. Many airlines have implemented stricter regulations regarding travel kennel sizes, breeds allowed to travel, crate sizes permitted on the aircraft, and flight routes that will allow live animals. This has made it more challenging for pet owners to find suitable travel options for their furry companions.

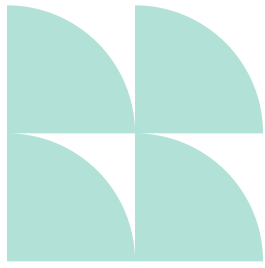


01

Temperature embargoes have also become a major concern for pet owners. These embargoes, which can change at any moment, restrict the transportation of pets during certain months of the year or when the temperatures are above 85 °F or below 45 °F. This unpredictability has added an extra layer of complexity to pet travel planning.

Some countries' pet import requirements have also changed, including Australia, New Zealand, and imports to the USA from rabies-risk countries. Failure to comply with these import requirements can result in delays or even refusal of entry for pets.

As with many other industries around the world, pet shipping has also become more expensive. The biggest culprits are airline cargo charge increases, quarantine fees, and import permit fees.



Flights & Embargoes



02

Airlines We Use

Air New Zealand

Alaska Airlines

American Airlines

British Airways

Emirates

Hawaiian

KLM

Lufthansa

Qantas

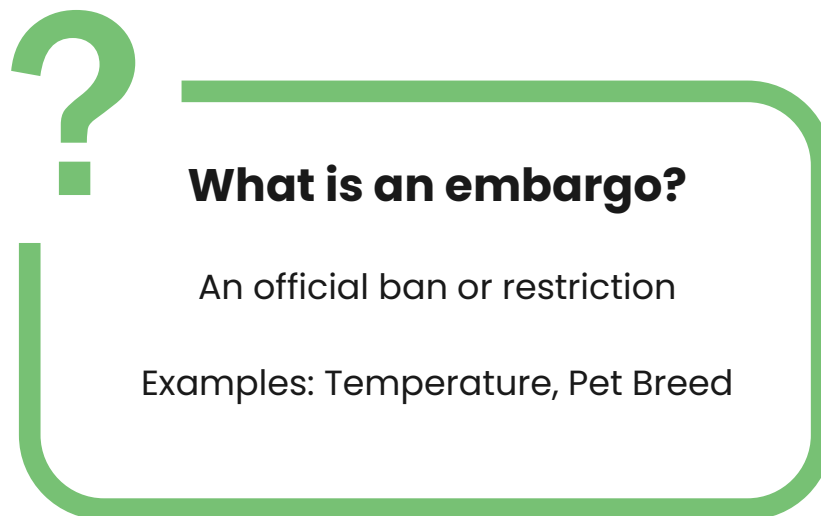
Singapore Airlines





When pets are traveling, airlines can change their aircraft or flight routes at any time. A flight route that may have been available for pets previously, may not allow animals. We have to work with the airlines to find the safest and most efficient route possible. Sometimes this means that a direct flight is not available.

It is also not uncommon for airline staff to go on strike a few times throughout the year. This affects operations in which flights are not operating or they do not accept pets during this time.



What is an embargo?

An official ban or restriction

Examples: Temperature, Pet Breed

Some of the embargoes and strikes we've seen this year:

- British Airways implemented a summer embargo for some airports including ATL, AUS, DEN, DFW, IAH, PHL, and PHX.
- Lufthansa staff went on strike on March 27, which affected their operations.
- Alaska Airlines implemented a full heat embargo in DFW and IAH from October 19 to October 24.



04



Transparency & Communication

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly reshaped the way we communicate and interact with one another. One of the most notable changes is the increased expectation of transparency and constant communication. Clients now expect speedy replies and frequent, if not daily, updates leading up to their pet's travels as well as updates once they have begun their adventure.

Starwood has created a Pet Travel Portal with checklists and guides throughout every step of the process. We've also created a pet tracker that provides real-time updates while pets are in transit.

Beyond the practical aspects of communication, the pandemic has also emphasized the importance of empathy and understanding. In times of uncertainty and stress, clients seek reassurance and support from our Pet Travel Support Team. Empathy has always been and continues to be a crucial element in our communication with clients.

Top 5 Cat Breeds We've Shipped

Domestic Shorthair
Tabby
Ragdoll
Domestic Longhair
Siamese

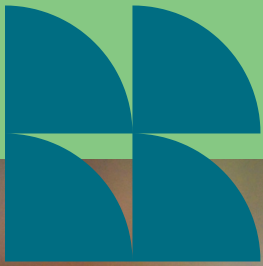


Providing Exceptional Client Service with Starwood's Dedicated Team

Our team at Starwood is committed to delivering the best possible service to our clients. We understand the importance of adapting to changes and meeting clients where they are. To ensure smooth communication, we utilize automation, email, phone, and text messaging throughout the process. Our dedicated team is what sets us apart and makes the Starwood Difference.

Top 10 Dog Breeds We've Shipped

Labrador Retriever	French Bulldog
German Shepherd Dog	American Pit Bull Terrier
Golden Retriever	Border Collie
Poodle	Siberian Husky
Chihuahua	Australian Shepherd



Elderly Pets & Pets with Pre-existing Conditions



05

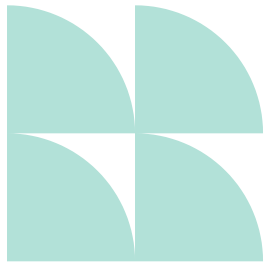
We have seen an uptick in pet owners who want to transport their elderly pets or those with pre-existing health conditions. Understandably so, since pets are a part of the family. Just like their human owners and with changes in veterinary medicine, pets are living longer than ever.

However, transporting elderly pets or pets with pre-existing conditions can pose several risks, and it's essential to take precautions to ensure their safety and well-being during the journey. Starwood asks every client for detailed information about their pet's age and medical history.

The stress and physical demands of travel can worsen existing health conditions, especially in elderly pets or those with chronic illnesses. Before embarking on a journey, pet owners should consult with their veterinarian to assess their pet's overall health and discuss any potential risks or concerns. The vet may provide additional recommendations or precautions to ensure the pet's well-being throughout the trip.

Top 10 Dog Names

Luna	Puppy
Bella	Milo
Max	Lola
Charlie	Daisy
Coco	Lucy



06



Brachycephalic Pets & Banned Breeds

Brachycephalic (also known as snub-nosed) breeds are inherently more risky to transport via air. However, these breeds continue to be popular for pet owners. Below are the most common of these breeds:

Cats:

Persian
Himalayan
Burmese
British Shorthair
Exotic Shorthair

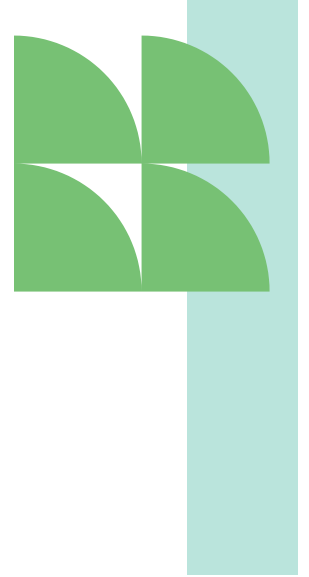
Dogs:

Affenpinscher
American Bully
Bulldogs
Pugs
American Pit Bull Terrier
American Staffordshire
Terrier
Boston Terrier
Boxer
Brussels Griffon
Bull Mastiff
Bull Terrier

Chow Chow
English Toy Spaniel
Japanese Chin
Japanese Spaniel
Lhaso Apso
Pekinese
Pit Bull
Shar Pei

These breeds have certain risks and considerations due to their unique facial and respiratory anatomy. These risks primarily stem from their brachycephalic (short-nosed) features, which can make it more challenging for them to regulate their body temperature and breathe efficiently. Because of this, many airlines have restrictions on these breeds.

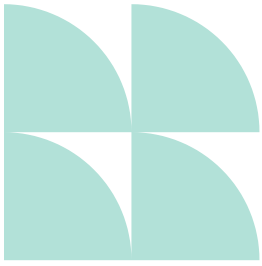




Starwood has implemented special precautions when transporting snub-nosed breeds including:

- Not transporting these breeds during the hottest summer months (May to Sept).
- Requiring a kennel that is one size larger than would normally be needed.
- Encouraging pet owners to have serious discussions with their veterinarian on whether their pet is fit to fly.

The most popular snub-nosed breed that we've had requests for is a French Bulldog



Banned or Restricted Breeds



Some countries and airlines have restrictions on what they consider to be “dangerous dogs.” Unfortunately, this is not always dependent on the actual behavior of each individual animal. However, we must comply with the airline and country rules. Sometimes this means that we have to turn away clients with a breed banned in their destination country. In other cases, we have to find the best airline that can accommodate these breeds.

Common Banned or Restricted Breeds:

American Bully
American Bulldog
Dogo Argentino
Karabash (Kangal) (Anatolian Shepherd Dog)
Caucasian Ovcharka (Caucasian Shepherd Dog)
Rottweiler

Some airlines require these breeds to be in a special reinforced crate made of metal or wood





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07

Future Predictions



Predicting the future of pet travel will depend on advancements in technology, changes in regulations, and evolving consumer preferences. While we can't predict the future with certainty, we anticipate the continued rise of pet ownership and in turn pets being transported.

As the demand for pet-friendly travel grows, safety will remain a top priority. More stringent regulations and guidelines for pet travel safety may be introduced to protect animals during transit.

Technological Innovations may play a significant role in the future of pet travel. For instance, we may see the development of pet-specific tracking devices, apps, and wearable technology that monitor a pet's well-being during travel. These innovations could provide real-time updates to pet owners and transportation providers.

Pet travel between countries may become more streamlined with standardized regulations and documentation. The development of global pet travel passports or digital health certificates could simplify the process of crossing international borders with pets.



Regulations around pet travel, such as quarantine periods and vaccination requirements, may continue to evolve in response to public health concerns and emerging diseases. It's important for pet owners to stay informed about these regulations before traveling.

The pet travel industry is likely to grow as more people choose to include their pets in their travel plans. This growth may lead to greater competition and innovation in the market, resulting in more options and better services for pet owners.

Staying Ahead of the Curve: Starwood's Leadership in Pet Travel

In an industry that is constantly evolving, Starwood is dedicated to leading the charge in pet travel. We pride ourselves on our ability to adapt to change and continually seek out new methods for safely transporting pets and satisfying our customers.

Our latest innovations include:

- A digital pet travel kennel calculator
- A pet travel portal for clients
- A comprehensive Knowledge Base
- An online pet kennel store
- A pet tracker for real-time updates





Conclusion

Pet travel has seen significant advancements and changes in recent years, reflecting the growing importance of pets in our lives and the increasing demand for safe and convenient ways to transport them. From improved regulations and safety standards to innovative technologies and pet-friendly accommodations, the pet travel industry has evolved to better cater to the needs and well-being of our furry companions.

In the coming years, we can anticipate further developments in pet travel, driven by ongoing research, technological innovations, and a shared commitment to making pet travel a seamless and enjoyable experience for both pets and their human companions. By staying informed, advocating for responsible pet travel practices, and embracing new solutions, we can ensure that the pet travel industry continues to improve and evolve for the benefit of all.



1,054
Happy reunions
this year

4.9
Company rating

3,960
Company reviews

Fun Facts

Top 10 Cat Names

Luna	Milo
Bella	Simba
Leo	Oliver
Kitty	Lily
Charlie	Lucy

Top 10 Destinations

United States/Hawaii	Italy
United Kingdom	New Zealand
Australia	Japan
Germany	Portugal
Spain	France

Top 10 Most Interesting Requests

Pot-bellied Pig	Red Kangaroo
Chickens	Green Cheeked Conure
Ball Python	40 White Eared Bulbuls
African Fish Eagles	Rat
Gray Parrot	KuneKune Pigs

Partner with Starwood



To establish a business partnership with Starwood, please reach out to:

Mark Uyeno
VP of Business Development
Mark@starwoodpet.com
631-721-5574

