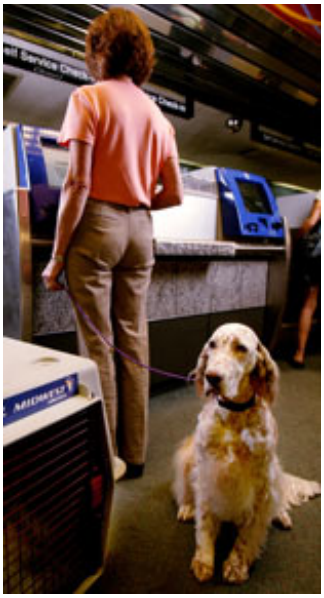
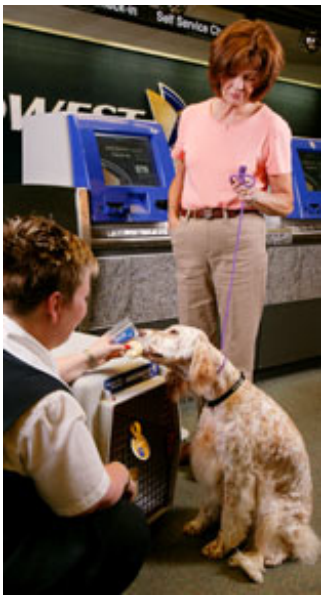
Flying with Your Pet - Pet Carriers (Part 4)

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff





- The night before departure, fill your kennel's plastic water bowl and put it in your freezer. On travel day, keep it in a cooler during your drive to the airport, then clip the frozen water dish inside the carrier before heading into the terminal. This will keep your pet hydrated as the ice thaws during the flight, and prevent major spills during transport.
- Trim your dog's nails to avoid them getting snagged on anything within the carrier/kennel.
- Feed your pet a light meal 4-6 hours before your flight, then do not feed him again, but continue to offer small amounts of water.
- A long walk before getting in the car will help burn off excess energy and make it easier for your pet to relax in flight. A quick pit-stop before reaching the airport is also recommended.
- Plan on arriving at the airport at least two hours prior to departure time and go directly to your ticket counter to begin the check-in process. The ticket agent will review all your pet's documentation and place them in a plastic sleeve that attaches to your kennel.
- Be sure to keep your pet in his kennel or carrier within the airport except when requested by security or airline personnel. Security will ask you to briefly remove your dog at the checkpoint while they inspect the interior of his crate and then they will ask to gently inspect your dog (a very noninvasive pat-down).
- Again, be careful with tranquilizers and be sure to check with your veterinarian. They can increase the risk of heart and respiratory problems during flight. If you are worried about your pet's anxiety level, consider a homeopathic pet stress formula with bach flower or valerian root.

Boarding & Take-Off

After you board the aircraft, notify the pilot and at least one attendant that you are traveling with your pet. Before the doors close, ask for confirmation your pet has been loaded onto the aircraft (pet-friendly airlines like Midwest will do this automatically). If you are able to bring your lucky friend into the cabin with you, you'll be asked to stow away the carrier under the seat in front of you.

Arrival!

You will be reunited with your pet in a designated holding area near your airlines baggage claim. Be sure to give your little traveler a big hug and plenty of praise before you give them a treat and a drink from their portable water bowl. Now's also the time to examine your pet carefully - eyes, ears, nose, paws, joints, and general demeanor. If you have any concerns, take your pet to an airline representative to report what you've discovered and then ask for the location of the nearest veterinarian to assess and document any health issues.

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Congratulations on a "Bone Voyage!"

Flying with your pet doesn't have to take your stress-level to new altitudes. When you trust your airline, ask the right questions, and plan well-ahead, there's no reason why your pet can't enjoy a little getaway with the rest of the family!

Part 1 Introduction: Calming Your Concerns	Part 2 Travel Planner Countdown: 1-2 Months Prior	Part 3 Travel Planner Countdown: 10 Days Prior	Part 4 Travel Planner Countdown: Travel Day

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