

Moving with Your Pet



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BABY
ALLIGATORS!**
\$2.79 PLUS TAX
(IN CLUBHOUSE)

To help our service members ship their furry friends in comfort, the following are some tips on what you need to know to ship your pet on a plane or in a car.

Traveling by Plane

When transporting a pet on a plane, your first point of contact is your local transportation office. It can help you make the appropriate reservations for air transport, as well as kenneling once you arrive. Furthermore, your sponsor can also help make arrangements for shipment.

Also keep in mind that shipping a pet is your responsibility. There is minimal reimbursement for pet expenses, including cages, the cost of shipping your pet, quarantine of your pet and/or kenneling. Furthermore, with the tightening of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules regarding U.S. flights, shipping a pet onboard a commercial airline may be more costly and cumbersome.

Once you receive your orders, you should plan immediately for shipping your pet. Make your pet's flight reservations early. Check that your airline of choice will

accept pets on the day and flight that you prefer and verify its regulations regarding shipping a pet in the cabin or as cargo. Obtain a non-stop flight if possible, as this is much easier on your pet. Also, attempt to avoid heavy weekend or holiday flights to limit undue stress.

Furthermore, if you are transporting your pet in the baggage area of a commercial plane, the airline may refuse to allow your pet to be transported if the temperature is considered "extreme," which is typically above 85°F or below 45°F. Early morning or night flights will be cooler during warmer months and midday flights are warmer in the winter.

If you own a snub nose dog, such as a pug, boxer, bulldog or Pekinese, avoid having your pet travel by air in hot weather due to difficulty with their breathing. Check with the airlines for special arrangements. Animals who are pregnant or in heat, are less than eight weeks old and have not been weaned for more than five days or are elderly should not be travel by air because of the risk to their health. One of your options in shipping your pet is to ship them on a military contracted

flight. Air Mobility Command (AMC) charters these flights. However, AMC flights are limited to cats and dogs only.

Furthermore, AMC has its own set of regulations regarding pet shipment that must be adhered to. For example, pet and container, with a combined weight of 100 lbs. or more will not be accepted for category B shipment on AMC flights. For more information on shipping your pet on an AMC flight, visit www.amc.af.mil.

Upon boarding, you should ask a flight attendant or other crew if they can check that your pet has safely made it aboard the aircraft and is situated comfortably.

Traveling by Car

When transporting a pet in a vehicle, there are precautions you need to take to ensure your pet's safety.

Weeks before your scheduled long trip, take your pet for short car rides around town to allow them to get used to riding in the car. Gradually increase the distance. Also, have your dog's nails trimmed before

the trip to reduce damage to your car's interior.

Cats should always be transported in a solid plastic carrier with plenty of ventilation. The same goes for other small animals, such as ferrets and rabbits. Cover the carrier for the first part of the ride to reduce stress on your pet. Label the carrier with your new contact information.

Dogs need to be restrained in the vehicle using a harness specifically designed for dog transportation. Consider installing safety gates so your dog can move freely in the back portion of the vehicle.

When moving your pet, don't forget to bring along any favorite toys or food, as well as plenty of bottled water. Some pets can get sick from drinking water drawn from new areas. Cats will need a portable litter box and scooper for the trip. Do not feed your pet when you begin your trip as they can quickly become car sick.

Make sure that your pet has current identification tags on them with your new address and phone number just in case they become lost. Some experts advise you to attach your pet's rabies tags to their collars as well. Keep a recent photo of your pet with you at all times.

Bring your pet's health certificate in the car if you are traveling between states in case you are required to show it.

During the trip, try to keep your pet on their normal feeding and exercise routine. Be aware that your pet can get car sick like a human can. Be prepared to stop periodically if this is the case.

When exercising your pet during the trip, never allow your pet to run off leash. Be careful when entering or exiting the vehicle so your pet does not dart off and become lost. Have a long leash and a stake handy so your pet can run outside

in an open area freely without getting loose.

Never leave your pet unattended in a car during a hot day. Temperatures can become harmful in as few as five minutes.

If the day is mild and you need to leave your pet in the car, park in a shady spot, crack the windows an inch or so and leave plenty of water within your pet's reach. Check on your pet frequently for signs of heat prostration.

If your trip requires an overnight stay, do your research and find a pet-friendly hotel en route to your destination and call the hotel you will be staying at to make a reservation. Tell them you need to stay in a pet-friendly room.

Once You've Arrived

If you will be staying in a temporary lodging facility, your pet will most likely

need to be kenneled since pets are not authorized in temporary lodging facilities.

If you are moving directly into your new home, make an immediate search of the home to make sure there are no dangers to your pet.

Place your pet's belongings in similar places to where they were at the last home, such as the cat's food in the kitchen. Once you are sure your pet will be safe, you can take them off their leash or remove them from their carrier.

Cats should not be allowed to roam outside of the home for the first few weeks. This enables them to get used to the smells of their new interior surroundings.

Gradually, after two weeks have lapsed, start accompanying your cat outside for short periods. Your cat should start feeling more comfortable with the new home after several weeks.