Pet travel guidelines

Ensure your pet’s safety by following this list of guidelines to help with the travel process.

☐ **Step 1: Check your kennel**

Having the correct kennel size is important. Be sure to buy a kennel beforehand so your pet can get accustomed to it. As a general guideline, please make sure your pet can sit, stand and move around within its closed kennel, without touching the sides.

Please follow the kennel requirements to ensure the safest transportation of your pet:

### Material and additional items

- Made from rigid plastic, metal or wood and held together with metal nuts, bolts or screws. Plastic covers over the metal bolts or screws are acceptable.) Snap-sided kennels and modified snap-sided kennels cannot be accepted.
- Two dishes (one for food and one for water) attached to the inside of the kennel. Make sure dishes are accessible from the outside without opening the door. (Bottle water feeders are not approved.)
- A bag of food taped to the top (in the event of a delay).

### Design

- Leak proof and escape proof, with a metal grated door. Plastic kennel doors or top-opening doors cannot be accepted.
- Not collapsible; not constructed to fold; no wheels or wheels are locked in position.
- Adequate ventilation on at least three sides for domestic U.S. and four sides for international destinations.
- Large enough for your pet to stand upright without touching its head on the top or the sides of the kennel. (Its fur and ears cannot touch the top or sides of the kennel.) Make sure your pet can stand, sit and lie down in a natural manner.

### Cleanliness

- Clean with no offensive odors.
- Absorbent material on the bottom; however, the use of hay, wood shavings and straw are not allowed.

### Labels

- A sticker titled “Live animal” and a sticker titled “This side up” (or directional arrows) on the top and on opposite sides to the long side of the kennel. Please make sure the letters are at least one inch in height.
- A label with feeding and watering instructions. If your pet is not to be fed, there must be attached written instructions from an accredited veterinarian to not feed or water the animal.
- An attached statement that food and water was offered within four hours prior to delivery to American Airlines.

### Additional information

- A maximum of two puppies or kittens are permitted per kennel as long as both animals are less than 20 pounds (9 kg.) and under six months old.
- For animals traveling into the U.K., a maximum of two adult animals (of comparable size, up to 20 pounds [9 kg.] each (and who are accustomed to cohabitation) may be transported in the same container. Animals up to six months old and from the same litter (up to a maximum quantity of two) may also be shipped in the same container or compartment.

### Additional information

- After the appropriate screening has been completed by our Cargo agents, releasable cable ties will be attached to all four corners of the kennel door. American Airlines will provide these ties to you at no cost. You may provide your own ties or sealing mechanisms provided they can be removed prior to screening without the use of tools.
**Step 2: Verify your destination requirements**

Depending on where your pet is traveling (within the U.S., from the U.S. to a foreign country or from a foreign country to the U.S.), the paperwork needed can vary, and in some cases a live animal broker/shipper is required.

- Visit the USDA website here to obtain the requirements for your pet’s destination. While you are there, don’t forget to check the requirements for the return trip if applicable.
- If a customs broker or customs clearing agent is required for your destination (or if you simply prefer to utilize another resource to help you with the required paperwork), you can use this resource to find a broker/shipper that works best for you.
  - Note: All pets coming into the U.S. will require a broker to clear customs upon arrival, unless cleared by customer
  - If your pet is traveling out of the United States, you can also contact the consulate or embassy of the destination country to align with local pet regulations

Getting the paperwork correct is critical to ensuring your pet’s safety. If it does not address all import and export country requirements, your pet could be refused, quarantined for up to four months or returned to the origin and further fees could be charged.

**Step 3a: Prepare your documentation**

The following documents are needed when you drop off your pet at any American Airlines facility.

- Two forms of identification are required from the person dropping off your pet. The person picking up your pet will also need two forms of identification.
  - One form needs to be a valid government-issued photo identification
  - A second form can be any identification with your first and last name

Please avoid sedating your animal. Sedation is not permitted from the United Kingdom.

However, if sedation is required, please also provide these details at check-in.

  - Manufacturer details (for example: Merial, Pfizer, Zoetis, Intervet or Fort Dodge)
  - Name of medication (for example: Defensor, Imrab, Purevax, Rabvac or Nobivac)
  - The amount of medication administered
  - Time and date when the medication was administered
  - Lot, batch or serial number of medication
  - Lot expiry date

- A health certificate signed by a USDA-licensed veterinarian stating that the animal is healthy enough to travel by air and is free of injury and disease.
  - Please ensure the certificate was issued within 10 days of your pet’s departure date.
  - If the words “mix” or “mixed” are used to describe the pet, then the predominant breed must be referenced.
  - Please ensure the certificate clarifies that the animal is fit to travel and there is no risk of birth occurring during the entire journey. If the animal has given birth, the time of tender must be greater than 48 hours post whelping.
  - Please provide the original certificate and an extra copy.

- A rabies vaccination certificate (if it is not included on health certificate).
  - Rabies vaccination requirements vary by state and country of destination. Some of the variations include species needing vaccinations, the age at which the animal must be first vaccinated and the duration of vaccination. Visit the APHIS Pet Travel website to ensure that your certificate meets all requirements.

For international pet shipments only:

- Your pet’s microchip number or tattoo number (if it is required for your destination).
  - If your pet is microchipped, please also provide the microchip documentation

- If your pet is not microchipped, please ensure the tattoo is clearly legible and you’ve provided.
  - Paperwork that your pet was tattooed on or before July 3, 2011
  - Paperwork that your pet was vaccinated against rabies after it was tattooed
  - A veterinarian’s record of the date of tattooing, including the tattoo number and the date of the rabies vaccination.
**Step 3b (For cats, dogs and ferrets to the UK): Prepare documentation**

Pets traveling to the United Kingdom will need the documents listed below in addition to the those provided in Step 3a. You will need all of the necessary documents when you drop off your pet at an American Airlines facility.

- The Annex IV document or the Pet Passport with fully completed veterinarian and owner details (These documents are only required for cats, dogs and ferrets.)
- The Non-Commercial Pet Declaration form (part three of the Annex IV document)
- A live animal customs broker and/or shipper is required to ship live animals to or from the U.K.
  - Shipper and/or broker contact information can be found on the IPATA website here.
- If your pet is microchipped, please ensure that its microchip was implanted same day or prior to the rabies vaccination.
- If your pet is tattooed, please ensure the licensed veterinarian recorded the date of tattooing, including the tattoo number the date of the rabies vaccination stated in the Annex IV document or the Pet Passport.
- The rabies vaccination documentation:
  - Ensure the pet was vaccinated within 21 days before traveling (the day of vaccination counts as day zero).
  - Ensure the pet was at least 12 weeks old when vaccinated.

**The following information must also be documented for the pet’s microchip number or tattoo:**

- Vaccination manufacturer details (for example: Merial, Pfizer, Zoetis, Intervet or Fort Dodge)
- Vaccination product details (for example: Defensor, Imrabo, Purevax, Rabvac or Nobivac)
- Vaccination lot, batch or serial number of vaccine, and lot expiry date
- Vaccination validity dates (U.K. government needs to know when vaccine was administered and when it will expire).
- If your pet is a dog, ensure they were treated against tapeworm no less than 24 hours and no more than 120 hours (five days) before it arrive into the U.K.
  - Ensure the tapeworm treatment contains Praziquantel as the active ingredient.

**Customs procedures for entry into the UK from non-EU countries:**

- Owners of pet transferring residency from non-EU countries (including students) should apply for Transfer of Residency (ToR) relief in advance of arrival. Complete this form and submit a copy to HMRC at nch@hmrc.gov.uk.
- Owners of pets who are U.K. residents returning to the U.K. after visiting a non-EU country are not required to pay the VAT; however, will be asked to provide proof that the pet exited the U.K. (export AWB or customs entry) and proof of residency
- Non-EU residents visiting the U.K. with their pets will be required to pay customs VAT on arrival. This can be reclaimed on proof of exit from the U.K.
  - (Value of animal + Cost of transport + U.K VAT adjustment (£100.00)) = VAT valuation @ 20% of total
- Any animal entering the U.K. which has been owned for less than six months or has been gifted, purchased, rescued etc. will be liable to import tax upon arrival
  - (see above VAT valuation calculation)
- Please note that there are additional fees to be collected in the U.K. as follows: the Heathrow Animal Reception Center (HARC) charges £7700 GBP (per AWB) to transport your pet to the quarantine station, and £83.00 GBP (per AWB) for all live animal shipments to the U.K. will be charged to collect your pet from the aircraft (each additional pet on the same AWB is 41.00 GBP). Airline handling (£3700 GBP) and customs clearance fees will also apply (price varies by broker).

**Step 4: Check breed restrictions**

Is your breed clear to travel? Find out here.

- To ensure the well-being of all animals, breeds and mixes of brachycephalic and snub-nosed cats and dogs cannot be accepted for travel due to the risks associated with their hereditary respiratory issues.
Step 5: Check temperatures

For the health and safety of your pet, please verify that all city temperatures are within a safe range by visiting The Weather Channel, and by checking hourly temperatures for every city in the scheduled routing. You can call or email the Live Animal Desk to verify these temperatures. For the safety of the pets we transport, American Airlines is not able to accept pets when temperatures fall outside of the following ranges without an acclimation letter: 45°F - 85°F (7°C - 29°C).

- American Airlines Cargo cannot accept any animal if the forecasted and/or actual temperature is above 85°F/29°C at each station they travel to.
- American Airlines Cargo cannot accept any animal if the forecasted and/or actual temperature is below 45°F/7°C at each station they travel to.
  - However, if the forecasted and/or actual temperatures fall below 45°F/7°C and above 20°F/-6°C, American can accept warm-blooded animals if a certificate of acclimation from a licensed veterinarian is included on the health certificate.
  - American Airlines cannot accept any animal if the forecasted and/or actual temperatures fall below 20°F/-6°C or above 85°F/29°C regardless of the acclimation letter.

Step 6: Additional information

For the health and safety of your pet, please verify that all city temperatures are within a safe range by visiting The Weather Channel, and by checking hourly temperatures for every city in the scheduled routing. You can call or email the Live Animal Desk to verify these temperatures. For the safety of the pets we transport, American Airlines is not able to accept pets when temperatures fall outside of the following ranges without an acclimation letter: 45°F - 85°F (7°C - 29°C).

- The Airbus 319, 320, 321S, 321H and 32B (with the exception of 32B flights at New York JFK to/from LAX and San Francisco [SFO]) have limitations that do not allow pets to be transported due to the heat and vent capability on these fleet types.
- Offer your pet a light meal and a little water within four hours prior to delivery to American Airlines. Bring a leash to the airport so that you can walk your pet before and after your flight.
- Bring a leash to the airport so that you can walk your pet before and after your flight.
- We recommend you arrive at least two hours prior for U.S. domestic and four hours prior for international flights to allow sufficient time to complete all inspections and acceptance procedures.
- We reserve the right to refuse any pet that appears ill or overly aggressive.

Step 7: Pay in person

Payment options vary by drop-off location, but please note that we cannot accept payments over the phone or internet. Please ensure that cardholders/check makers are present at time of payment.

- Passenger ticket counters, baggage service areas and global PPS shipping centers:
  - Credit/debit card, customer credit account
- Cargo terminals:
  - Credit/debit card, customer credit account, cashier’s checks, U.S.P.S money orders, traveler’s and certified checks (all made payable to American Airlines in the exact amount)
- International Origin Stations:
  - Please inquire with your local office regarding payment option

24/7 Help Desk

For any further questions, please contact the American Airlines Cargo Live Animal Desk at 1-800-227-4622 or liveanimals.cargo@aa.com