



The Ultimate Flying with a Dog Guide and Checklist



2018 Edition | www.longhaultrekkers.com | by Dave Hoch



This checklist provides a comprehensive list that every pet traveler should have.

Be prepared! Print this list and check off items as you prepare for your flight.

1. Preparation

Recommended to start at least **two months** prior to departure

Task:	Notes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Pet Health Research	Determine if your dog is healthy to fly. What is the age, breed, and temperament? Ask your vet if you're unsure. Is the breed permitted to fly? Many short-nosed and muscular breeds are banned. Puppies generally cannot fly under 8 weeks old.
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine Destination	What are the temperatures like where you're flying to? Pets cannot fly if the temperatures are over 29C (79F) or below 7C (45F).
<input type="checkbox"/> Destination Regulations	Are there any import or export rules for your destination? If international, you'll need government export papers. Determine if your pet has all the proper immunizations and paperwork.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Flight Options	Determine the best flights by route, costs, and times. Layovers are welcome if your pet is flying in cabin as it gives them a stretch and use the toilet. If your pet is flying in cargo, direct flights can be better as it minimizes the total transit time. Red eye flights can be advantageous as the temperatures can be cooler and the dog is typically sleeping at night vs day time flights.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Flight Carriers	<p>Research which airlines have the best record for flying with a dog. Several airlines will not fly pets in cargo: Allegiant, Frontier Airlines, JetBlue Airways, Southwest Airlines, Spirit, and Virgin America.</p> <p>Confirm airline requirements for flying with a pet. ***Note: many airlines are rapidly changing their requirements like Alaska, Delta, and United. Double check the rules are their websites.</p> <p>Appendix Figure 1: includes an image of the 2017 DOT Loss, Injury, or Death of Animals during Air Transportation. Source: https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/resources/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/304371/2018februaryatcr_0.pdf</p>

2. Booking

Recommended to start at least **two months** prior to departure

Task:	Notes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Book Flight	Reserve flight based on above research in preparation section.
<input type="checkbox"/> Call Airline for Confirmation	Call the airline with your booking and confirmation number. Tell them you're traveling with a dog and ask if there are any requirements. Request that a pet record be attached to your flight reservation. Note any requirements and ask how you can submit any paperwork.

3. Appointments

Recommended to start at least **one month** prior to departure

Task:	Notes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Make Appointment with Your Local Veterinarian	<p>Based on the requirements from the airline, you'll need to go to a local veterinarian for documentation. This is typically a certificate of health, vaccinations, microchip, and paperwork.</p> <p>***Note: some countries have additional requirements like tapeworm. Use the https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel for USA exports. For other countries, Google the respect country for their import requirements.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> If Flying Internationally, Make Appointment with your local USDA - APHIS office	<p>If flying internationally, you'll need to get the correct country specific export papers from the USDA APHIS to bring to your local veterinarian to fill out. This information can be found here: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel and includes the Accredited Veterinarian and Health Certificate.</p> <p>Your appointment must be less than 5 days before your departure date. The paperwork</p> <p>***Note: USDA appointments need to be made well in advance as they fill up. You'll need to go in person the day of the appointment without your pet. Some USDA - APHIS offices allow an over night mailing of the paperwork. Find your local office here: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/service-centers-endorsement-offices***</p>

4. Gear and Logistics

Recommended to start at least **two weeks** prior to departure

Task:	Notes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Order Kennel and Dog Gear	<p>Whether flying in cabin or cargo, your pet will need the appropriate gear. Make sure you have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kennel (hard for cargo or soft for in cabin). Check size requirements. If flying internationally, the size must be considerably larger.• Water bowl• Puppy pads• Dog bed• Cable ties (for cargo kennels)• Live animal stickers (for cargo kennels) <p>* Our list of favorite kennels can be found on our blog: https://longhaultrekkers.com/best-dogs-kennels-for-flying/</p> <p>* Our gear list for flying is available on our blog: https://longhaultrekkers.com/flying-with-a-large-dog-gear-list/</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Assemble Kennel	<p>Once you've procured your kennel, make sure to put it together with enough time for your dog to get use to it.</p> <p>Don't forget to double check the IATA requirements for kennels. It must be secured with zip ties and metal bolts. Source: https://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live-animals/Documents/pet-container-requirements.pdf</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Training Your Dog	<p>If your dog has not flown before or acclimated to a kennel, it's a great idea to get them use to being in one. Feeding them their meals or training with positive reinforcement is a great method to getting your fuzzy friend liking their new den.</p>

5. Final Preparation

Recommended to start at least **one week** prior to departure

Task:	Notes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm Flight Reservation	Call your airline and confirm your reservation and that there is a record of your dog traveling with you. You'd be surprised how often this can get screwed up by airlines. I also recommend calling again the day before your flight.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Pet Relief Areas	<p>Many airlines have pet relief areas inside the airport. Some are past security and others are before. It's helpful to familiarize yourself with the location of this area prior to getting to the airport. This can be helpful if you're flying with a dog in cabin and have a layover.</p> <p>Note: you can save the map of an airport as a PDF on your phone for quick reference when at the airport.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Get Final Veterinarian Paperwork	Attend your local veterinarian appointment get the appropriate paperwork filled out. Double check the requirements online here: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel .
<input type="checkbox"/> Get Government Export Paperwork	<p>Get your official documentation from your local veterinarian endorsed by the USDA – APHIS or respective government office. You'll need the following (from the USDA – APHIS website):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORIGINAL health certificate or document. The health certificate MUST be completed, signed and dated by a USDA accredited veterinarian.• Rabies vaccination certificate• Import permit and test results (if required by importing country)• Payment for endorsement services<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Payment types accepted: User Fee Account, check, money order, credit/debit card○ More information about User Fees - Charges for Health Certificate Endorsement• Prepaid, pre-addressed return shipping label (FedEx, UPS, USPS)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The "TO" and "FROM" name/address should be your own. Return shipping labels that contain a USDA address may be rejected.○ Not required for documents submitted for endorsement in-person.

6. Flight

Tips for flying with your dog.

Task:	Notes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Pack Gear	Confirm you've got all the gear needed for the flight. Tip: pack puppy pads and poop bags in your carry on. If your dog has an accident in the airport, it's easy to quickly clean up the mess.
<input type="checkbox"/> Day of Flight Meal and Water	Go light on the water and food for your dog the day of the flight. You can feed them, just don't go overboard. Same for water. You don't want to encourage your dogs natural digestion cycle to produce while in flight.
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet Time Before Departure	Have your pet go potty as close to your departure time as possible. If there is a pet relief area past security, they can go there. Some dogs don't like the artificial turf in the pet relief areas, so it's recommended to have them go outside at the airport, prior to security. Tip: make sure your pet goes #2 prior to flying. This will ensure they are less likely to go during the flight.
<input type="checkbox"/> Checking In	Have all your paperwork ready to go and easily organized. If you're flying with a dog, you typically don't have to wait in the queue at the counter. There is a special services booth you can check-in at.
<input type="checkbox"/> During the Flight	Don't be afraid to tell the flight crew that your dog is flying with you today. If they're in cargo, you can politely ask to make sure the air conditioning is turned on and to be aware that you're dog is being transported.

Appendix:

Airline Reports to DOT of Incidents Involving the Loss, Injury or Death of Animals During Air Transportation

Annual Report of 2017 Incidents

The monthly reports on the previous page are required only during a month in which a carrier has a reportable incident. In addition, U.S. carriers that operate at least one aircraft that has a designed seating capacity of 60 or more seats, are required to report the total number of reportable animal incidents for the entire calendar year and the total number of animals transported in the calendar year. This report must be filed with DOT within 15 days after the end of that year. This annual report is required even if a carrier had no reportable incidents during the year. Click the carrier's name to see the redacted version of the actual incident reports filed by these airlines.

Carrier*	Death	Injury	Loss	Total Incidents	Total Transported	Incidents per 10,000 animals transported
SkyWest Airlines	0	0	0	0	46,392	0.00
ExpressJet Airlines	0	0	0	0	23,256	0.00
Horizon Air	0	0	0	0	17,289	0.00
CommutAir	0	0	0	0	16,893	0.00
Republic Airlines	0	0	0	0	14,872	0.00
Mesa Airlines	0	0	0	0	13,669	0.00
GoJet Airlines	0	0	0	0	8,014	0.00
Hawaiian Airlines	0	0	0	0	7,510	0.00
Envoy Air	0	0	0	0	6,470	0.00
Endeavor Air	0	0	0	0	4,951	0.00
Compass Airline	0	0	0	0	2,054	0.00
Sun Country Airlines	0	0	0	0	304	0.00
Shuttle America	0	0	0	0	61	0.00
Alaska Airlines	2	0	1	3	114,974	0.26
Delta Air Lines	2	1	0	3	57,479	0.52
American Airlines	2	1	0	3	34,628	0.87
United Airlines	18	13	0	31	138,178	2.24
TOTAL	24	15	1	40	506,994	0.79

*The rankings of the carriers that had no incidents are based on total number of animals transported.