

Travelling with your pet

Before you go

Ask yourself: will my cat or dog be comfortable and happy? Some animals simply prefer to stay at home and a 'homesick', possibly motion-sick pet will ruin everyone's trip. In such a case it's probably wiser to leave your pet with a friend or relative or hire a 'petsitter'. If that is not possible, you might consider boarding him or her at a clean, well-run kennel or cattery.

Plan ahead

If you do decide to take your pet along, you must take as much care with the preparation of your pet's trip as your own. If you plan to travel by plane, or boat, find out if your pet will be welcome and, what kind of reservations and transport arrangements must be made. If you'll be staying at hotels, motels or campgrounds, you must check if animals are allowed or if kennel facilities are available. If you're staying with friends or family, make sure your pet is also invited.

Travelling by plane

- Contact the airline you wish to fly well in advance – each has its own regulations, and reservations for your pet will be necessary.
- Be sure to ask about the airline's rules for pet crates or carriers.
- Try to book a direct flight, or one with a minimum of stops.
- Be at the airport early, place them in their travel crate yourself and pick your pet up promptly when you land.
- Consider contacting a pet transport company who can usually arrange a complete door-to-door service and look after any paperwork required.

Travelling by car

- If your pet is not used to being in a car, take him or her for a few short rides before your trip. Your cat will probably be most comfortable in a carrier.
- Pets should NEVER be allowed to put their heads outside the window when riding in a car. Dirt particles or stones flicked up by tyres can cause injury or infections.
- Dogs travelling in the back of utes should be either caged or tethered. The lead or chain should be attached to a harness or secure neck collar, with the other end securely fastened to a point near the middle of the cabin. The chain or lead should be of a length that will allow the dog to lie down, stand and move about, but should be short enough so that the dog cannot put its legs over the ute's sides or climb onto the roof of the cabin.
- Plan 'snack', exercise and rest stops about every two hours if you're taking a long drive.
- Give the main meal at the end of the day. Dry food is most convenient, but if your pet needs canned food, dispose of any unused portions if they cannot be refrigerated.
- It is not recommended to leave your dog or your cat in a parked car for any period of time. If you must leave your pet in a parked car, lock all doors and open windows enough to provide good ventilation, without allowing them enough room to jump out or get their head caught. **Remember, on hot days the temperature in a parked car can rise to dangerous levels in just minutes and your pet could die of heat stroke.**

Travelling by boat

- Some cruise ships do welcome pets. Check with the cruise line or ask your travel agent.



Wherever you go

- Ensure your pet ALWAYS wears a collar with complete identification and a registration tag. Consider having them microchipped.
- Pack his or her favourite food, toys and dishes, a cooler of water and a leash.
- Have your pet examined and vaccinated, if necessary, by your veterinarian before a long trip.
- If your pet must travel in a crate or carrier, be sure it is strong, large enough for them to stand up and turn around, has a place for food and water, is well ventilated, has a leak-proof bottom and closes securely.
- Contact the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) or ask your veterinarian for advice if you are planning to move overseas with your pet, as health and vaccination regulations vary greatly.

