



# FLYING WITH YOUR DOG

Many people are opting to fly with their dogs in the plane's cabin instead of shipping them by crate in the cargo area. These are often limited by the airlines to small breed dogs or emotional support animals. If you plan on bringing your dog in cabin on a flight with you, here's what you need to know to make the process as smooth for you both as possible.

## Prepare your Dog

To prepare your dog for the flight, here are several steps that can help keep them comfortable:

- Get your dog used to the carrier ahead of time. Leave it open at home so your dog can get comfortable with the space. Leave small treats in the carrier so your dog finds it to be an enjoyable space where good things happen. If your dog has a favorite chew toy, allow them to chew on it while in the carrier. Do not lock your dog into the carrier at first, let them move freely in and out of it.
- Once your dog is comfortable with the carrier, begin getting them used to traveling in it by securing them inside and taking them for small car rides. Place the carrier on the floor, as this will best mimic what the airplane floor will feel like as you fly. Slowly begin to take them on longer car rides so they learn to settle in.

## What you need to do

There are preparations which need to be finished before you can get on the plane. Here is a general list below, though each airline has their own set of guidelines.

- Get a health certificate! No airline will allow a dog to fly without a health certificate from the vet, showing that the dog is healthy enough to fly. These certificates can expire anywhere between 7 days and one month, so make sure you do not get it too early. While at the vet, you may want to ask about any medicines that may help keep your dog calm during the flight, if your dog tends to be nervous or stressed.
- When booking your ticket, make a reservation for your pet too. Most airlines have additional fees and have a limit of how many "in cabin" pets are on each flight. Make sure you tell them clearly that you want your pet to be with you, as your carry on. The airline may have additional paperwork for you to complete before they approve your dog's flight. You must alert the airline at least 48 hours before your flight.

## **Needed Items**

- A collar and leash. Make sure the collar is easy to take off quickly, because you will have to carry your dog with you when you go through the metal detector. Having a collar which is easy to remove can help with the process. Ask the TSA attendant if you need to remove it, or if they will allow your dog to keep their collar on. This varies from airport to airport. Pack a simple leash, non-retractable, for ease of packing and use. Dogs on retractable leashes often trip people in busy airports. A simple 4-6 foot leash is easy to place in the pocket of your dog's carrier.
- A small, soft sided carrier of a sturdy fabric material which has plenty of mesh vents for your dog to breathe. This will be considered your carry on item, so being able to fit your dog's needed items in a pocket will be very helpful to you. This carrier must fit under the seat in front of you, so getting a square one will give your dog maximum space for comfort.
- A collapsible water bowl. Carrying around a small, collapsible water bowl will be very helpful if your dog needs a drink during a layover, or while waiting for your luggage. There are plenty of water fountains that you can fill this bowl in.
- A small bag of food. If your flight is going to be a long one, having a sandwich bag of food for your dog is very helpful.

## **Helpful Tips**

- Give your dog a bath! Nobody wants to be in a plane with a stinky pup!
- Please keep your pet in the carrier for your entire trip. Do not let your dog out to walk while waiting at the terminal unless you are in an appropriate outside area. People with allergies will thank you!