



Romingo 

The Definitive Guide to *Air Travel* with Your Dog

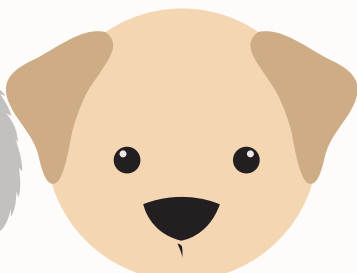


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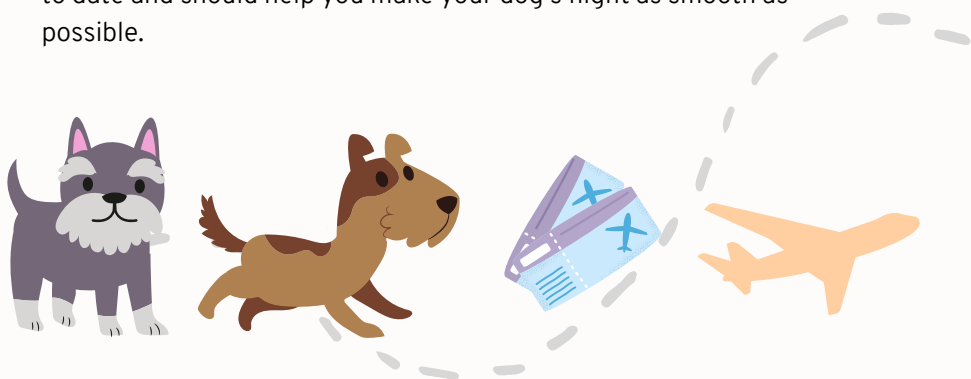
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Introduction

When you're flying with your pets, the last thing you want is to get hit with surprise policies. Airlines all have very specific regulations for flying with pets, so study up and prepare yourself (and your dog!) for your flight to prevent delays, confusion, or even canceled flights. Here's what you absolutely must know before airplane travel with your dog.

Certain rules apply for all flights

First, prep your pup for a trip to the airport by reviewing the rules that apply to all US airlines. There are a few things you can do to make the flight easier, plus some general policies you'll need to know before you go, too. As of October 2021, the guidelines outlined in this article are up to date and should help you make your dog's flight as smooth as possible.

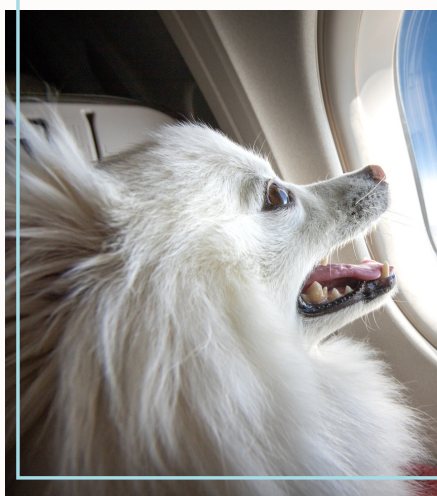


How your dog is allowed to fly

We know, you'd never consider your pup baggage, but when it comes to booking air travel, that's how you need to think about it. With the exception of service dogs, it's not a guarantee your dog will be able to sit next to you on the flight. Normally, cats and dogs will have to be treated as carry-on luggage stowed under the seat in front of you, or packed away in the cargo area. The first step is to determine how your dog will travel.

- *In-Cabin*

Riding in the cabin with you is the ideal way for your small dog to fly. It's safer because you won't have to worry about how carefully the baggage handlers treat your dog, or the pressure and temperature of the cargo area. Unfortunately, it's not an option for every breed. Typically, only small dogs that actually fit in an under-the-seat carrier will be able to fly by your side. Big dogs and those that are too aggressive, noisy, or smelly will have to go in the cargo hold.



- *Cabin carriers*

All US airlines require that your dog can fit comfortably inside a pet carrier that is stowed under the seat. They define “fitting comfortably” as being able to sit, stand, turn around, and lie down without being squished inside the carrier. The maximum dimensions for these under-seat carriers are typically 18 x 11 x 11 inches, but you'll want to double check with your airline because different types of planes can have slightly different dimensions. Mesh-sided pet carriers are your best bet because there's plenty of ventilation and they can collapse as needed.

- *Cargo*

When it comes to flying in cargo, there are fewer size and behavioral restrictions. Big dogs, feisty dogs, and animals that wouldn't be able to fly in the cabin can ride in the relatively distraction-free baggage zone. On the other hand, certain breeds aren't permitted in cargo for health or behavioral reasons, and some airlines just don't ship dogs (and yes, they do call it shipping when the dogs fly with the baggage). Although the airlines do their best to keep your dog safe and comfortable, understand that there are risks with having them ride in the bottom of the plane next to the luggage. Prep your dog for this wild ride by practicing with the kennel, learning about your options, and making sure they're in tip top health.



- *Cargo Kennels*

Choosing the right kennel for shipping your dog via cargo is mostly dependent on the size of your animal. Whatever kennel you choose, make sure it's made of hard plastic, wood, or metal, has plenty of ventilation, and a leak-proof bottom. There should be handles and a metal door that locks. Pack your dog with food, water, and an absorbent blanket. Additionally, you can give them some comfy toys and treats to help them feel more comfortable. On the outside of the kennel, attach an extra packet of food and of course, clear identification with your contact info and flight details.

Breed Restrictions

Most dogs will have no trouble landing a spot on a flight, but there are certain breeds that airlines tend to prohibit.

If you have a brachycephalic or snub-nosed dog like a pug or Frenchie, you might not be able to fly with them.

Airlines are very strict about this, so even if your pup is a mix, they probably won't be able to fly in cargo. This is for your dog's safety; the air pressure can aggravate their breathing, potentially sparking a dangerous health issue. Thankfully, these same airlines usually allow squish-faced dogs to fly under the seats as carry-on pets.

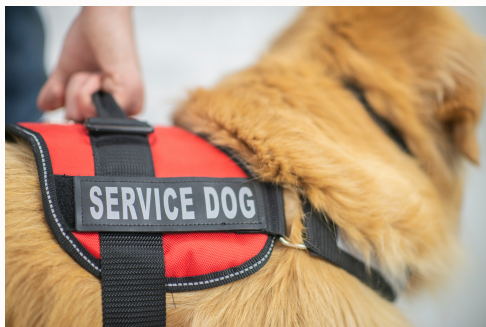


Although it's not fair, many airlines prohibit "historically aggressive breeds" like pitbulls, bullies, staffies, rottweilers, and other stigmatized breeds, even when flying in cargo. Will the airlines conduct DNA tests to determine your mutt's lineage? No, but they don't accept mixes or breeds that "look" aggressive, either.

Flying with service animals

If your dog has a job, the rules are a little different. Thankfully, service dogs are never required to fly in cargo, nor must they be kept in an under-the-seat carrier. As a general rule, FAA-approved service animals are dogs (as opposed to other species like mini horses, monkeys, etc.) and airlines don't charge a fee to transport them. But be aware of what the TSA actually considers a service animal.

Since January 2021, emotional support animals are no longer considered service animals and aren't allowed to fly for free in the cabin. However, service dogs (such as Seeing Eye dogs or other service animals that meet the ADA definition) can fly alongside their owners.



If you do have an emotional support animal, you can bring them along in the cabin as long as they stay inside the carrier like any other pet.

Finally, service dogs always need a DOT Service Animal Air Transportation form completed. It proves your animal is healthy, trained, and well-behaved. Make sure to fill it out and submit it to the airline at least 48 hours before your flight.

Getting through TSA Security



Check with your local airport, but the general rule is this: If your dog is in a carrier, you'll take them out of the cage right before your turn through the scanner. The carrier goes through the x-ray machine while you walk or carry your dog through routine security screening. Once you're cleared, return your dog to the carrier and wait for your flight. Most airports have dog rest areas, but otherwise, your dog needs to stay in the carrier until you reach your destination.

If you're traveling with a service dog, the rules are slightly different so they can inspect your dog's harness. Don't worry, you won't be separated from your service dog at any time.

If you're flying in from another country, double check that you're permitted to bring your dog into the United States. In June 2021, the CDC suspended importing dogs from certain countries where there's a high risk for rabies. If you're flying from a country on this list, you won't be able to bring your dog into the country unless it's a service dog with advance approval from the CDC.

Forms and certifications

Before you fly with your dog, you must get your pet cleared by a veterinarian. Your vet can draw up a pet passport, which is essentially a bundle of documents proving your animal is healthy, up to date on

vaccinations, and is cleared to fly. While microchips aren't required, they are strongly encouraged.

These documents are vitally important, but don't get them too early. Stop by the vet's office no more than 10 days before your trip to ensure your papers are valid when you fly.



Other booking tips

As tricky as domestic flights can be, flying internationally opens up a whole new can of worms. Each country has its own import rules and based on the length of your flight, you might not even be able to fly with a dog at all. We strongly recommend calling your airline before booking an international flight with your dog.

Choose direct or non-stop flights whenever you can. It's less stressful for your dog, prevents mistakes, and you won't have to worry about meeting other airlines' requirements.

Remember to call your airline ahead of time to make sure you have a spot for Spot. Most flights have a limit to the number of animals they can allow on the plane due to space restrictions.

Think you're ready to book your dog's ticket? Here are 10 of the most popular airlines flying in and out of the United States and their dog policies.

Airline Policies



American Airlines

- **In-cabin** – American allows one carry-on pet per passenger and the dog must stay in the kennel for the duration of the flight.
- **Cargo** – No historically aggressive dogs permitted, even in cargo. Snub-nosed dogs are not allowed. Neither are sedated animals.

Requirements: Your dog requires a health certificate issued within 10 days of travel and must be 8 weeks or older.

Service dogs must have completed training and will sit at your feet, on your lap, or fit under the seat in front of you. If your service dog is too big, you might need to purchase the seat next to you so it can sit.

Additional Info: Fees apply for both carry-on and cargo pets. If the weather is exceptionally hot or exceptionally cold, you won't be able to fly with your dog in cargo. Checked pet service is suspended with the exception of US military personnel flying on orders.



Delta Airlines

- **In-cabin** – Delta permits one carry-on pet carrier per passenger, as long as the dog stays underneath the seat. Pit bulls and pit mixes are not allowed.
- **Cargo** – Dogs must be 8 weeks or older to fly in cargo. Be aware that pets aren't guaranteed to be shipped on the owner's same flight or schedule.

Requirements: Dogs in cabin must be 10 weeks old for domestic flights, 16 weeks if traveling to the US from another country. If you decide to sedate your pet, you have to provide vet consent.

Only service dogs are permitted on Delta flights, not other species. Service dogs must have completed training and passengers are permitted up to two service dogs.

Additional info: Additional fees apply. Mother dogs are allowed to fly in-cabin with her unweaned puppies if they all fit comfortably in the carrier. If the weather is too hot or cold, dogs can't fly cargo, and you may need a Certificate of Acclimation if the temperature drops below 45 degrees.



Southwest

- In cabin – Make sure your dog is well-prepared, because Southwest will deny boarding for any dog that excessively barks, growls, or whines. Carriers can be up to 18.5 x 8.5 x 13.5 inches, and only one pet carrier per passenger.
- Cargo – No cargo transportation available.

Requirements: Dogs must be 8 weeks old. The airline requires that “the animals must be harmless, not disruptive, odorless, and require no attention during flight.”

Service dogs are permitted, but other service species are not. Law enforcement dogs are also allowed. The dog can sit on your lap or on the floor in front of you, but not on a seat.

Additional info: Southwest only allows pets that have adult humans traveling with them and are not permitted on international flights. Additional fees apply and Southwest does not provide first aid to animals in the event of an emergency.



United Airlines

- In cabin – Pit bulls are not permitted in the cabin. Hard-sided kennels must be 17.5 x 12 x 7.5 inches, but soft-sided kennels can be a little larger because they can collapse.

- **Cargo** – Cargo transportation is suspended until further notice.

Requirements: Dogs must be at least 8 weeks old on domestic flights and 4 months for international flights.

Service dogs that are fully trained and over 4 months of age are permitted to sit in the space in front of the passenger's feet.

Additional info: No military pets may fly. Certain destinations with high temperatures prohibit flying with dogs in cargo. Additional fees apply and no emergency first aid will be administered to pets.



Spirit Airlines

- **In cabin** – One pet carrier, and a maximum of 2 pets per passenger are permitted. The dog counts as the carry on luggage and carriers must be 18 x 14 x 9 inches to fit under the seat. Only soft-sided carriers are permitted on Spirit flights.
- **Cargo** – No cargo transportation available.

Requirements: Pets must be 8 weeks old and weaned. According to the airline, "The animal must be harmless, inoffensive, odorless, and require no attention during the flight."

Service dogs: Spirit permits up to 2 service dogs per person. The dog cannot be larger than a 2-year-old child, which means it must be able to sit on your lap or on the floor in front of you.

Additional Info: With the exception of service dogs, there are no pets permitted on international flights. Additional fees apply.



Lufthansa

- **In cabin** – The total weight of the dog and carrier must be under 8kg (17.6lbs) and the maximum size of the carrier is 22 x 16 x 9".

Only soft-sided carriers are permitted, and only one dog per carrier per person.

- **Cargo** – No snub-nosed dogs permitted. “Fighting or dangerous dogs” should be transported in special crates, unless they are between 3-6 months old.

Requirements: Dogs and cats must be 8 weeks old before flying. Sedated dogs are permitted, but strongly discouraged by Lufthansa.

Service dogs are never allowed on a passenger seat. They will sit in front of the passenger and are buckled with a special safety belt provided by Lufthansa. Muzzles are requested, but not required.

Additional info: Fees apply for pets, and there are special rules for international flights.



Alaska Airlines

- **In cabin** – All in-cabin dogs must fly with an adult human passenger, and there is a maximum of 2 pet carriers per passenger. The carrier can be either hard sided or soft sided carriers with maximum dimensions of 17 x 11 x 7.5 inches.
- **Cargo** – No short-nosed dogs are allowed in cargo, but they may fly in the cabin. Alaska Airlines does not transfer pets to other airlines, so if you have a connecting flight, make sure you pick up your dog from baggage first.

Requirements: Dogs and cats must be 8 weeks or older. Dogs with “offensive odors or those that create a noise disturbance” will have to travel in cargo regardless of size. Health certificates must be dated within 10 days of travel.

Service dogs: Alaska Airlines limits service dogs to two per guest. This airline does permit service animals in training free of charge, as long as they are being delivered to their new owners.

Additional info: Additional fees apply and up to 2 pets of the same size and species can travel together in a single carrier. In case of extreme temperatures, cargo animal transport will be denied.

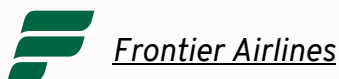


- **In cabin** – The combined weight of dog and carrier must not exceed 20 pounds. The maximum dimensions of the carrier are 17 x 12.5 x 8.5 inches in order to fit under the seat. One pet permitted per carrier, with a maximum of two pets per passenger.
- **Cargo** – No cargo transportation available.

Requirements: Puppies must be at least 8 weeks old and must stay inside the carrier the entire flight.

Service dogs will sit in front of the passenger while seated. The dog must stay on the floor unless it's small enough to sit on the passenger's lap without actually touching the seat.

Additional info: No pets accepted on interline or codeshare bookings. There is an additional fee for pets.



- **In cabin** – Dogs in carriers count as baggage. The carrier must be 18 x 14 x 8 inches or smaller, and Frontier recommends it be a soft sided carrier. One pet per carrier per passenger.
- **Cargo** – No cargo transportation available.

Requirements: Frontier highly discourages sedating pets for travel. Health certificates must be issued within 10 days of travel and dogs must be at least 8 weeks old.

Service dogs must be 4 months or older, fully trained, and there is a maximum of two service dogs per passenger. They must sit in front of the passenger and cannot touch the passenger's seat in any way.

Additional info: Additional fees apply. There will be no oxygen administered to pets in case of an emergency.



Air Canada

- **In cabin** – Air Canada limits pets to one per carrier per passenger, and it does count as carry-on baggage.
- **Cargo** – No snub-nosed dogs are permitted in cargo. Breeds classified as “strong dogs” must travel in a special reinforced metal crate. Dogs can’t weigh more than 100 pounds, so exceptionally large dogs are prohibited.

Requirements: Pets must be at least 12 weeks old. Pets are allowed only on certain flights due to airliner size restrictions.

Service dogs: One service dog is permitted per passenger and the dog must sit comfortably at your feet. If your dog is too big for the space, you can ask for a seat with extra legroom.

Additional info: There is an additional fee and dogs can only travel with adult human passengers. For safety reasons, your pet may not be able to fly in the cargo area during extreme weather.

Don't forget! You can book a pet-friendly hotel with Romingo (www.romingo.com) before you and your furry best friend embark on the airplane. Once you land at your destination, check in at your reserved pet-friendly stay where you and your pup will be welcomed with open arms! With Romingo, you and your pup are guaranteed to have an enjoyable, hassle-free dog-friendly travel experience.