

ASPCA Releases Tips for Safe Air Travel

Follow these tips before flying with your dog.

Traveling by plane can be stressful for you and your pet, but the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has released some tips to keep pets safe and you calm during air travel:

1. Make a veterinary appointment to make sure your pet's vaccinations are up-to-date before leaving, and obtain a health certificate dated within 10 days of your departure.
2. Make sure pets wear collars with identification tags. Include destination information on the tags in case your pet escapes.
3. To decrease the chances of your pet being mishandled by baggage personnel, or possibly left behind en route, book a direct flight.
4. Get a USDA-approved shipping crate that is large enough for your pet to stand, sit and turn around in comfortably.
5. Label shipping crates with the words Live Animal. Use arrows to indicate the upright position of the crate. Write identification and contact information on the top of the crate. Line the crate with bedding like shredded paper or towels to absorb accidents.
6. Place a current photo of your pet on top of the crate for identification purposes. The night before leaving, freeze a small dish of water for your pet. Place the frozen dish in the crate before you leave. Tape a pouch of dry food on the outside of the crate so baggage personnel can feed your pet en route.
7. Check with your veterinarian before tranquilizing your pet.
8. Let every airline employee you see know that you are flying with a pet, so they will be prepared for any additional considerations or attention you may need.
9. If you have any concerns about the welfare of your pet, have airline personnel check on the animal if feasible.

Posted: Nov. 15, 2005, 5 p.m. PST