

Tips for Weekend Travel With Dogs

A dog trainer offers tips to make weekend travel with dogs fun and stress-free.

Posted: May 24, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

A holiday weekend is coming up fast, during which time many people will travel to other parts of the state or country. And for many families with dogs, a vacation would not be complete without their beloved four-legged friends.

But hitting the open road could cause stress to both dog and owner unless the right steps are taken to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip.

“Pets such as dogs and cats are often excited by the prospect of travel in cars and can enjoy a road trip as much as their human companions, but disruptions to their schedule can have a negative impact on pets, leaving them stressed and frightened,” said animal trainer Kellyann Conway.

“Pet parents can keep their dog or cat content during travel by anticipating their needs and planning properly for the trip,” she said.

Conway offers the following suggestions to ensure a dog’s comfort during travel:

For car travel with dogs: Acclimate your dog to the vehicle prior to the trip. Determine if he or she has problems with motion sickness and/or exhibits excessive excitability that may require treatment. Secure your dog in a carrier or a pet seatbelt harness to ensure your pet is safe in the event of an accident and is unable to cause distraction to the driver. Keep your dog on his normal feeding schedule as much as possible. Keep plenty of fresh water on-hand to ensure your dog stays well hydrated. Stop often, allowing your dog to get a little exercise and some extra potty breaks. Don’t forget a leash and make sure your dog is wearing a properly fitted collar and ID tags for pit stops during the journey. Bring your dog’s identification, medication, and a current photo in case you’re separated. Also, consider having your dog microchipped, which can help find your pet if he is ever lost. Never leave your dog alone in a car. Extreme cold and hot temperatures – even if a window is left partially open – can be fatal in just a matter of minutes.

For hotel travel with dogs: Most hotels will require proof of vaccinations or a health certificate for pets, so be sure to contact the hotel ahead of time to make any necessary arrangements. Avoid hotel food; always bring your dog’s regular food on the trip. When packing, include some of your dog’s creature comforts including favorite bedding, toys, and food dish. If staying in a hotel, bring your dog’s crate or carrier and consider using the “Do Not Disturb” sign to keep out unexpected hotel staff. Also, consider leaving the television or radio on to drown out unfamiliar voices and noises which may frighten your dog.

For more dog travel tips, [click here](#).