

## **Flying With A Dog**

Dog owners who go on business trips or take vacations have to decide whether to board their dog in a kennel or take the dog with them. For many dog owners, leaving their animals behind is not an option; they want the animal to accompany them, even if it means flying with a dog.

The key element when flying with a dog on an airplane is to make plans and work out the specifics in advance of the flight. The following is a list of details to consider before flying with a dog:

Dog owners who are flying with a dog will want to plan a direct flight to their destination, if possible. This will shorten flight time and help to reduce the dog's time in the animal-transportation carrier. The dog owner should call the airline as soon as the itinerary has been finalized. The airline may have rules, regulations, and policies that must be followed. If an overseas trip has been planned, there may be quarantine regulations that must be considered. Also, calling the airline in advance will enable a dog owner to discuss any requests or requirements that the owner may have. It is imperative to make sure that the cargo compartment of the airplane is pressurized, so that the animal will have oxygen and be warm enough while traveling.

There are different types of carriers used by the various airlines. A dog owner can contact the airline and ask them to provide a carrier in advance. Having the carrier at home before the flight will allow the dog owner to help the dog get used to being confined. This will help reduce some of the fear or anxiety that the dog may experience on the day of the flight. Some dogs need mild tranquilizers to help them remain calm while flying.

When the flight day arrives, the dog owner should plan to start the day early. This will give the owner enough time to exercise the dog, allow the animal to 'go potty,' and help the dog become comfortable in the carrier. Before the animal enters the carrier, the dog owner needs to place the dog's identifying information on the carrier and make sure it is on the dog as well. The owner can write the dog's name on the carrier in large letters, along with the owner's name and contact information. The owner needs to make sure that this information is securely attached to the dog's carrier as well as on his tag on his collar. An implanted ID tag is also a good idea, but must be obtained via a veterinarian prior to the trip.

After the dog owner releases the dog and carrier to the airline, the owner needs to request confirmation that the dog has been securely and safely loaded onto the plane. The dog owner also needs to verify, with an airline representative, that the dog is on the right plane.

After the owner arrives at the intended destination, he or she should immediately tell a flight attendant and an airline representative in the airport that his or her dog is on board. The owner can request that the dog's removal from the plane be given immediate priority. Finally, the dog owner needs to ask for the exact point of removal. Some airlines have a separate office or facility where passengers pick up cargo, including

animals, from a flight.

Dog owners who follow the above guidelines will be well-prepared when they are flying with a dog. They will ensure the dog's safety. In addition, the dog will be more at ease and less likely to experience fear or anxiety during an airline flight. Flying with a dog can be a great experience if precautions are taken to prepare ahead of time.