

Created by: Debra C. Argen
Airline Travel with Pets

The summer travel season will soon be kicking into high gear, and while it is hard enough to keep up with passenger airline allowances, security measures, and baggage charges, which seem to change daily, when you want to travel domestically within the United States with your favorite canine or feline, the rules of travel get harder.



With **Bailey**, an adorable 14-pound Shih Zuh, that goes everywhere with my sister's family, including in their canoe, and has an enviable wardrobe of argyle sweaters, fur-trimmed ski parkas, sporty tee-shirts, and a LBD (Little Black Dress, velvet with rhinestones I must add), and **Max**, a very handsome, and large Collie Lab mix, who is my brother's family dog, and alas, weighing in at 90-pounds hardly qualifies him as a small dog, as my muses, I looked at domestic airline travel with carry-on pets within the United States; pets traveling as checked or cargo, as well as on international travel, have separate requirements and restrictions that vary by airline, as well as by country.



Loveable Max

So, you have finally selected your holiday destination, your family is already visualizing their various ensembles for the trip, and the family pet is either wagging its tail in anticipation, or desperately hiding under a bed hoping not to be found, depending on whether or not they like to travel, and now the real fun begins, selecting an airline. When it comes to flying, all creatures are not created equal, and size does matter. Although the definition of domestic pet varies greatly in the eyes of the beholder, I kept this research limited to traveling with domestic dogs and cats.

Depending on the size of your pet, you have two options to consider, either carrying your pet on-board with you, or have it travel as checked cargo. As a point of reference for this research, I checked with **American Airlines**, **Continental Airlines**, **Delta Airlines**, **United Airlines**, and **US Airways** on their carry-on pet policies as of May 2009. Please note that the information is to be used as a reference point only, and that you should always check with the airlines directly on their carry-on pet policies and fees, which are subject to change.

American Airlines, www.AA.com, American Airlines accepts domesticated dogs and cats on-board in the Cabin with a maximum allowable total of (7): (2) in First Class, and (5) in Business Class/or Economy.

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Service animals are not counted in the maximum number allowed in the cabin, and are free of charge. Allowed Travel Destinations: domestic flights within the 48 contiguous United States, Alaska, Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, and St. Croix. Pets must remain in their carriers at all times during the flight. A pet kennel counts as either a passenger's one carry-on bag or personal item. Only one pet kennel per ticketed passenger may be accepted for travel in the Cabin. The kennel may contain (2) dogs or (2) cats but they must be the same species, ages between 8-weeks and 6-months, and weigh less than 20 lbs. Fee: \$150 each way.

Continental Airlines, www.Continental.com, Continental Airlines accepts domesticated dogs and cats on-board in the Cabin, and may be carried in lieu of a carry-on bag. Pets must be carried in an approved in-cabin kennel. The pet must be able to move comfortably in the kennel (stand up and turn around). The kennel must fit completely under the seat forward of the customer and remain there at all times aboard the aircraft. Only one pet per passenger is allowed in cabin. One pet per flight is allowed in the front cabin (select aircraft only), with (4) pets per flight allowed in the Economy Cabin on all Continental Airlines, Continental Micronesia, Continental Express and Continental Connection (except flights operated by Cape Air) flights. Pets must be a minimum of eight weeks old. Pet must travel on the same flight as the owner. Fee: \$125.00 each way.

Delta Airlines, www.Delta.com, Delta Airlines accepts pets on a first-come, first-serve basis. Call in advance to arrange to bring your pet on board. Delta Airlines limits the number of pets per flight to: (1) in First Class, (1) in BusinessElite®, and (2) in the Main Cabin. Your pet must be small enough to fit comfortably in a kennel under the seat directly in front of you. Maximum carry-on kennel dimensions are determined by your flight. Your pet must be at least 8 weeks old. You may not carry on more than one pet. Your pet carried on-board counts as one piece of carry-on baggage. Fee: \$150 each way.

United Airlines, www.United.com, United Airlines will allow dog and cats in the Cabin to travel with you if they are small enough to fit and stay comfortably in a carrier under the seat in front of you, and must be fully weaned dog or cat (minimum 6 months old, 1 per carrier); fully weaned puppies or kittens (minimum 8 weeks old, maximum 6 months old, maximum 2 per carrier). United Airlines may not be able to accommodate pets on some aircraft or routes, or in many United First and United Business cabins. Fee: \$175 - \$125, each way.

US Airways: www.USAirways.com, US Airways limits the number of pets allowed in the passenger Cabin. Reservations must be made in advance, as space for in-cabin pets is limited.

Only (1) small domestic dog or cat is allowed per passenger, and pets in the Cabin count toward the carry-on baggage allowance. Pets must remain inside their approved container under the seat directly in front of you. Fee: \$100 each way.

Now that you are ready to start traveling with your pet, be sure to read the article, [How to Pack and Travel Like an Expert](#), in the **Travel News** section, where we share some great packing and traveling tips to make your next trip stress-free, at least when it comes to packing.

Remember that when it comes to travel, life is a journey to be lived to its fullest. Enjoy your trip and accept the challenges that may come along with a smile, as it is all part of the experience; make every trip fabulous and a memorable one!

© June 2009. Luxury Experience. www.LuxuryExperience.com All rights reserved.