



The Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) is now fully operational. This scheme allows for limited movement of pets between the UK and some European countries under controlled conditions.

What do I need to take my pet abroad?

If you wish to take your pet abroad with you AND bring it home again you must ensure that you follow all the rules.

Your pet must be fitted with a permanent form of identification (a microchip) and have received a rabies vaccination, which is NOT carried out as part of the routine vaccination protocol in the UK. You are responsible for ensuring that all the relevant documentation is completed before you travel and for arranging to see a vet abroad before you return to the UK. The cost of meeting all these requirements is your responsibility.

Before you enter the UK your dog's microchip and all relevant documentation will be checked by the transport company. If documentation is not in order your dog will be returned to the country from which it is travelling or be required to undergo 6 months quarantine before being allowed back into the UK.

What happens at immigration?

Make sure you can answer YES to the following before arriving at UK immigration...

- My pet has a microchip
- My pet's rabies vaccination is up to date
- Blood test confirms adequate rabies protection (6 months before travel)
- Health certificate obtained from your vet before travelling
- We are travelling to an approved country
- We are travelling by an approved route
- Health certificate obtained from vet abroad to confirm treatment for parasites
- I have signed a declaration to confirm my pet has only visited countries approved by the scheme (Residency declaration)
- I have checked that additional certificates are not required by the country I plan to visit.

Your pet needs a microchip implant?

A microchip is a small implant that your vet will insert under your pet's skin which carries a permanent identification number.

Is your pet vaccinated against rabies?

You must make an appointment with your vet at least seven months before re-entry into the UK for your dog to receive a rabies vaccination. Once your vet has given the initial injection, booster vaccinations must be given (usually every 3 years) to maintain your pet's immunity. A microchip must be implanted BEFORE the rabies vaccination is given.

Is your pet protected against rabies?

A blood test must be performed to show that the rabies vaccination has been effective in protecting your pet against rabies. This test is usually performed about 1 month after the last rabies vaccination. You must take your pet's vaccination card with you when you visit your vet for this blood test. This blood test MUST be carried out at least 6 months before the date you intend to bring your pet into the UK.

Does your dog have the right certificates?

Your vet will examine your dog before you travel to certify that it has a microchip, is up to date with rabies vaccination, and has had a successful blood test. This is the PETS Certificate which can only be completed by a specially registered vet. In some instances it may be necessary for your vet to complete a separate certificate to show that your pet meets the health requirements of the countries you are visiting or travelling through. You should contact the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) office or Embassy of the country you are visiting for details of these requirements. Only vets approved by the government (LVIs) can sign these certificates - so check with your veterinary practice that

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they have a vet who is able to complete your documentation. At this time your vet can also examine your pet to ensure that it is fit to travel.

Does your pet normally live in the UK?

Does your pet normally live in the UK and has only visited countries in the following list?

Andorra, Gibraltar, Norway, Austria, Greece, Portugal, Belgium, Iceland, San Marino, Canary Islands, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Liechtenstein, Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg, Switzerland, France, Monaco, Vatican, Germany, Netherlands

If the country you are visiting is not listed here you cannot bring your pet back into the UK without it undergoing 6 months quarantine. The exception to this is the Republic of Ireland from which dogs can be brought to the UK without any conditions applying. You cannot enter the Republic of Ireland from the continent without putting your pet into quarantine.

A further 28 rabies-free islands are also included in the scheme. The additional qualifying islands are:

Antigua and Barbuda, Cyprus, Jamaica, Mayotte, St Vincent, Ascension Island, Falkland Island, Japan, Montserrat, Singapore, Australia, Fiji, La Reunion, New Caledonia, Vanuata, Barbados, French Polynesia, Malta, New Zealand, Wallis and Fortuna, Bermuda, Guadelope, Martinique, St Helena, Caymen Islands, Hawaii, Mauritius, St Kitts and Nevis.

Are you travelling on a route listed here?

- Calais to Dover sea crossing
- Eurotunnel Passenger Shuttle (not on Eurostar)
- Caen to Portsmouth
- Cherbourg to Portsmouth
- LeHarve to Portsmouth
- St Malo to Portsmouth
- Europe to Heathrow from Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, Helsinki,
- Madrid, Palma and Paris (Guide-dogs only)

At present travel is only permitted via a limited number of routes into the UK. Pets travelling through other routes will still be required to undergo a 6 month quarantine period.

Are you travelling with a company listed here?

- Brittany Ferries
- British Midlands Airways
- Eurotunnel Passenger Services
- Finnair
- Hoverspeed
- Lufthansa
- P&O European
- P&O Stenna
- SeaFrance

At the time of writing only these companies have been approved as carriers. If you are in any doubt contact the company you plan to book with and ask them for more details.

Has your pet been treated for parasites?

Not less than 24 and not more than 48 hours before you return to the UK your pet must be examined by a vet abroad. They will treat your pet for parasitic conditions which are present in the country you are visiting (to prevent them being imported into the UK by your pet). The vet will sign another health certificate which you will need to present to immigration on re-entry to the UK. If you are travelling to France the DEFRA website contains details of French consulate General's offices who will be able to supply you with the names of vets in the region of France from which you are returning.

Have you signed an owner declaration?

You will be issued with a Residency declaration form by the company organising the travel of your pet. The

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form may also be obtained direct from DEFRA. You must complete and sign this form immediately before embarking for the UK and hand a copy to the carrier when they check your pet's microchip. You should keep a copy of this form for your records. Make sure you obtain a certificate BEFORE travelling.

Does your pet have holiday insurance?

Strange as it may seem holiday insurance is now available for your pet too. This can cover emergency veterinary fees, third party liability, loss of passport and many other eventualities. Insurance is available for 30 days or longer periods. If your pet is already insured ask your insurance company if they offer discounted premiums for travelling.

Additional information

We love our pets and it is tempting to take them with us wherever we go. Before taking your dog abroad consider whether it would be better to leave him in his own home with someone to look after him or even to put him in a boarding kennel rather than take him on a long journey.

Further details can be found on the DEFRA website at www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/quarantine/qindex.htm or by contacting DEFRA on Tel: +44 (0)870 241 1710; Fax: +44 (0)207 904 6206; Email: pets.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

If you want any other information on health issues concerning your dog please contact Dalehead Veterinary Group on (01729) 823538 and we will be happy to advise you.