

Tips for Road Tripping with Your Pet

According to the [ASPCA \(American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals\)](#), nearly 80% of Americans own pets. About 78 million dogs and 86 million cats are living in U.S. households. Nearly [40 percent of pet owners](#) travel with their pets, and for those who do, they are finding more lodging and other services accommodating toward pets.

Most people worry about their pets when they're away from them, according to DogVacay.com. However, with an increasing number of hotels and attractions that allow pets, and pet sitting services cropping up in communities across the country, there are many options for road tripping with your pet. Even if you can't take your pet somewhere, such as a ball park, there are sitting services and boarding facilities which can help you whether for a few hours or overnight.

Here are several pet traveling trips:

- If you need pet sitting or boarding facilities, whether or not you take your pet on a trip with you, visit [Rover.com](#), which also now owns DogVacay.com, these websites to find a sitter or boarding place
- Looking for pet-friendly hotels, restaurants, and other places, visit [GoPetFriendly.com](#) and [BringFido.com](#)
- Pack well when taking your pet on the road or flying via plane. Pack enough pet food for the trip – don't count on picking up your pet's favorite food along the journey as it may not be readily available. Other things to pack: food and water dishes, bedding, litter and litter box, leash, collar and tags, grooming supplies, a favorite toy, a first-aid kit, and necessary medications. In addition, a container of drinking water for your pet should always be with you.
- Make sure your pet wears a sturdy collar with ID tags throughout the trip. The tags should have both your permanent address and telephone number. It's also very important to include a tag with the address and telephone number where you or a contact can be reached during your travels.
- Keep feeding to a minimum during travel. A light meal for your pet two to three hours before leaving is advised and give small amounts of water periodically in the hours before the trip. Also, resist the temptation to give your pet part of your burger and fries during your journey – upset tummies and cars don't mesh well.
- Make sure your pet's vaccinations are up-to-date and carry a health certificate with you. Additionally, if your pet doesn't travel well in the car, you may want to ask your veterinarian for a prescription to keep your friend calmer.
- Carry a current photograph of your pet with you. If your pet is lost during a trip, a photograph will make it easier for others to help you find your pet.
- Provide frequent bathroom and exercise breaks. Most travel service areas have designated pet walking areas. Be sure to stay in this area particularly when you pet needs a potty break...and of course, bring along a bag to pick up after your furry friend. When outside your vehicle, make sure that your pet is always on a leash and wearing a collar with a permanent and temporary travel identification tag.

- Dog parks and rest areas provide great opportunities for both pet parents and their four-footed traveling companions to get out of the car, stretch, play, eat, and just break up the monotony of driving. Be sure to provide this respite for yourself and your pet during your road trips – you both need breaks from riding in the car.
- Provide proper hydration. During your pit stops, be sure to provide your dog/cat with some fresh water. Consider taking along ice cubes, which are easier on your pet than large amounts of water.
- Never leave your dog/cat unattended in a parked vehicle. On warm days, the temperature in your vehicle can rise to 120 degrees in minutes, even with the windows slightly open. In addition, an animal left alone in a vehicle is an open invitation to pet thieves.
- Be sure that your pet is safely restrained in your vehicle. Utilizing a pet safety harness or travel kennel are the best ways to keep your dog safe. Cats should be in carriers for their safety (and yours!). A harness not only protects your dog from injury, but also keeps them from distracting you as you drive. If your pet prefers a travel kennel, be sure it is well ventilated and stabilized. Many pet owners use vehicle barriers, particularly for larger pets. These are best suited for SUVs. No matter what method you choose, back seat travel is always safer for your pet.

Implementing these ideas can make road tripping with your pet much more enjoyable and safe.