

# A guide to domestic travel with pets





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# Introduction

Australians and pets go hand in hand, with the country having one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world. In fact, there's estimated to be more than 24 million pets in Australia,<sup>1</sup> essentially matching our human population.<sup>2</sup>

But there are some important considerations to bear in mind before packing up for your next trip. This pet travel guide will walk you through all the essentials so you can make your next trip the best one yet.



<sup>1</sup>How many pets are there in Australia? – RSPCA Knowledgebase

<sup>2</sup>Australian demographic Statistics, September 2018 – Australian Bureau of Statistics



# Chapter 1: Where do you want to go?

The first question to ask yourself when planning a holiday is: where do we want to go? If it's just you and your pet, then the decision will be fairly easy. But if the kids and grandkids are coming along it might be worth pitching a few different ideas and then settling on one particular destination as a group.

And while your pet won't be able to have a say in the matter, it's still very important that you consider them when choosing a place to visit. After all, if you travel with your pet to a camping site or lake, you are likely to have a much easier time than if you want to visit a theme park or busy capital city.

## Finding pet-friendly destinations

If you're determined to travel domestically with your pet, you can use a wealth of online resources to find the perfect spot. There are so many sites these days dedicated entirely to finding the ideal pet-friendly destinations all around Australia.

Here are a few examples to get you started:

- [Holidaying with Dogs](#): Built like a standard search engine, use this website to plug in some potential destinations, as well as your check-in and check-out dates, and the number of people and dogs travelling with you.
- [BringFido](#): This website actually lets you find pet-friendly destinations all over the world, but it also has a specific section just for dog-friendly hotels, retreats and activities in Australia.
- [Take Your Pet](#): In addition to search functionality for pet-friendly caravan parks, hotels, wineries, parks and cafes, Take Your Pet has some great resources that can help improve your pet travel experience.

## Enjoying the trip with your pet

There's no point bringing along your pet if you intend to do activities where they won't be allowed to join. For example, visiting a city for its museums and art galleries is no place for a dog.



## Chapter 2: Health and safety

We always want our pets to be in the best possible condition, whether we're travelling for pleasure or simply living our normal everyday lives. But unpredictable events can happen when we least expect them, so it's important to be as prepared as possible.

Before you get on the road, spend a bit of time in the lead-up to the trip making sure your pet is in good health and that they will be safe for the duration of the holiday.

### Ticks, snakes and spiders

Are you planning to go camping? Will you be hiking in national parks, or perhaps spending some time by a deserted lake? While this may be a relaxing experience for both you and your pet, these places are often rife with creepy crawlies.

If a destination is popular for snakes or deadly spiders, maybe think about heading somewhere less crowded with less dangerous critters. Also make sure you are aware of when tick season begins and which parts of Australia are more susceptible to tick attacks.

### Vaccinations

Get in touch with your vet to make sure your pet is up to date on all their vaccinations. If not, schedule

an appointment to get it done before you leave. This is also a good time to ensure they are properly protected with monthly flea, tick and worming treatments.

### Microchipping

Microchipping dogs and cats is mandatory for all pet owners in Australia, except for those in the Northern Territory.<sup>3</sup> If you haven't had your pet microchipped, now is the time to do it. Also ensure your pet's details are up to date so you're contactable if your pet wanders off.

### Consultation

It's a smart idea to book a general consultation with your vet before heading off on holiday. They will be able to give your pet a thorough check-up and discuss your plans for travelling with pets. It may also give you peace of mind to know they are happy, healthy and ready to go on your big trip.

### Safety restraints

There's more to cover in ['Chapter 3'](#), but make sure your pet stays safe from day one of your journey with adequate safety restraints. Not all car restraints are created equal, so do your research and make sure you get the right size so your pet is comfortable throughout the car trip.



## Chapter 3: On the road again...

Ready to hit the road? You will be if you've considered all the important things for your pet like packing their essentials, planning for stops and keeping fresh water handy for them.

### Pack the pet essentials

Just like how children tend to throw tantrums when they go on holiday and forget their favourite toys, your pet will be much more comfortable in new places if they have some of their familiar items from home brought along for the ride.

Here are a few accessories to pack for the trip:

- Leash, collar and registration tags.
- Blanket or bedding.
- Favourite chew toys.
- First aid kit.
- Vaccination records.
- Seat covers.
- Car restraints.
- Lots of treats and pats for the road (especially if they are a nervous traveller and need constant comfort).

### Regular stops

If you're only travelling a short distance you'll likely be at your destination with no need to make stops for your pet (in which case, just make sure you take them for a walk beforehand and also let them relieve themselves and drink some water).

If, however, you're heading interstate or will be on the road for at least a couple of hours, it's important that you regularly stop and give your pet a chance to stretch their legs, go to the toilet or have some food and water.

### Staying hydrated

Speaking of water, it's wise to keep a bottle of clean drinking water in the car with you so you can give some to your pet while travelling.

### No pet left behind

Last but not least, don't ever leave your pet alone in the car. Even if you think you'll only be gone a few minutes, your pet could get severely stressed or overheat in a remarkably short time – especially in summer, and even more so if there's no air flow.

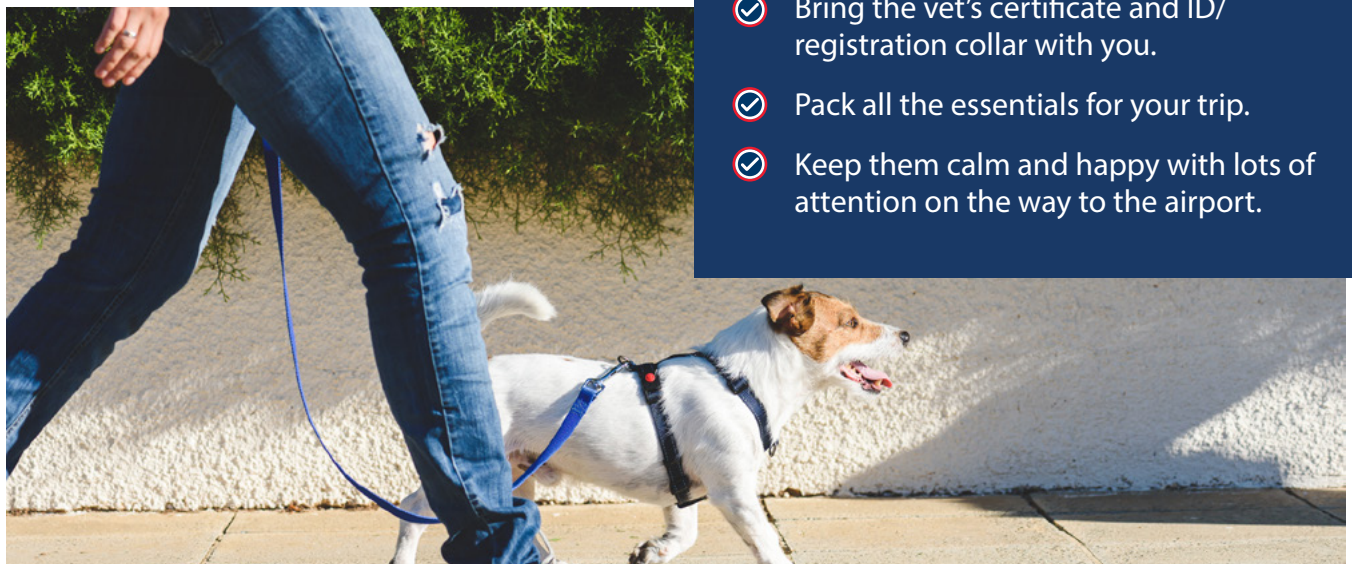


## Chapter 4: Travelling by air

If you're heading interstate and need to fly there (for example, holidaying in Perth from your home in Sydney) then there are some strict rules around bringing your pet with you.

### Crates and containers

Make sure you get your pet to familiarise themselves with the crate before their flight so they are as calm and comfortable as possible. Placing their blanket and a favourite toy inside can help this process immensely.



### Quick pre-flight checklist

- ✓ Tire out your pet before you head off to the airport with a long walk or run-around at the park.
- ✓ Make sure they haven't eaten at least six hours before the flight.
- ✓ Keep them well hydrated.
- ✓ Ensure the crate is comfortable for them.
- ✓ Bring the vet's certificate and ID/registration collar with you.
- ✓ Pack all the essentials for your trip.
- ✓ Keep them calm and happy with lots of attention on the way to the airport.



## Conclusion: Get out and about with your pets

There's nothing more enjoyable than being able to relax at your favourite holiday destination with your furry best friend. But as we've shown in this pet travel guide, there's more to adventuring with your pet than meets the eye.

To really get the best possible experience from your next holiday, make sure you consider all the necessities – from up-to-date vaccinations to getting the right car restraints to ensuring your destination is pet-friendly.

**Some of the most exciting times on holiday are those that are unexpected. But the unexpected can also mean your pet runs into trouble, getting injured or falling ill. To protect yourself financially from unpredictable vet bills, the right [pet insurance](#) policy could be essential. Call Australian Seniors on 13 13 43 to find out more, [or get a quick quote online now.](#)**