

PET TRAVEL SAFETY TIPS

PET TRAVEL SAFETY BEGINS WITH TRAINING

By now most of us know that using a pet safety restraint is the key to protecting our furry friends when traveling. But sometimes our cats and dogs need a little convincing. It's important to acclimate a pet to its new carrier or safety harness before heading out on a road adventure or even a short trip to the vet.

Choosing the right gear

Start by choosing the right restraint for your pet's size. For smaller pets, look for a carrier that has been crash tested and certified by the Center for Pet Safety. Based on research and testing, Sleepypod has determined a carrier is best for restraining smaller pets under about 18 lbs. Like people, pets come in all shapes and sizes so this is meant to be a rough guideline. Measure the pet's length and height and compare against the dimensions of the carrier. The carrier size should be proportionate to the size of the pet. When in motion, the pet can slide in the empty space.

Let the pet sniff the carrier or harness

Gradually introduce the pet to his carrier or harness in the days or weeks prior to travel, one step at a time. Start by placing the carrier or harness in a favorite or familiar spot at home and let the pet investigate. As soon as he sniffs or touches it, give him a positive reward of praise and treat.

Cats have smaller frames than dogs so should always ride in a carrier and never a safety harness.

For larger dogs weighing more than about 18 lbs., buckle up using a Center for Pet Safety certified safety harness. The Center for Pet Safety recommends harnesses without tethers. Find additional recommendations on their website at <https://www.CenterforPetSafety.org>

Never put the pet inside the carrier as a punishment. A carrier should always be a happy place.



Gradually expose pet to buckle or zipper noises

Next, let the pet hear the noises of the restraint's zipper or buckle. When he accepts the noise, give him a reward of praise and treat.



Integrate the safety restraint in a pet's everyday routine

For carrier users: Place familiar toys or comfort items inside and let the pet use it as an everyday bed. For particularly fearful pets, you might even try placing a small article of clothing with the owner's scent inside the carrier. Allow the pet to roam in and out and explore. Be sure he's comfortable with it before you zip the carrier with the pet inside.

For harness users: Work your way up to putting the harness on the dog for longer periods of a time, offering a reward with each successful step. Then have him play, eat, or do other fun activities while wearing his harness. For some dogs, the gentle pressure of a harness can have a calming effect and can help ease travel anxiety.

Familiarize the pet with restricted movement when in a car

When introducing the pet to a car, make sure the temperature inside is a comfortable temperature. Buckle up the pet in the back seat. If you are not using a CPS approved carrier or harness, position the pet in the rear footwell to prevent it from sliding in the car. Sit next to the pet while going nowhere, offering encouragement, praise, and reward.

Practice short outings then build to longer trips

Practice short outings in the car to get the pet accustomed to the motion of travel. Your practice destinations should be happy destinations like the park or the home a familiar friend.

When all else fails

For some pets, this process might require more time and successive trial runs. If a pet continues to show fear or anxiety, consult a veterinarian for a synthetic pheromone suggestion.

Written by Melanie Monteiro for Sleepypod

REPLACING A PET SAFETY RESTRAINT AFTER AN INCIDENT

Whether you use a pet carrier or safety harness, it's important to replace a pet safety restraint after an accident. The material can stretch, and just a little bit of extra slack can reduce its effectiveness.

Hopefully, you will never have to replace your pet safety restraint after an accident. If you do need a replacement, check with the manufacturer of your pet's safety restraint for their policy. Sleepypod will replace a Sleepypod safety harness or carrier for free through its Accident Replacement Program.

USING A SAFETY TETHER WITH A CARRIER

The safety tether is perhaps the most overlooked and underused feature of a carrier. It can prevent your pet from jumping or wiggling out into potentially hazardous situations.

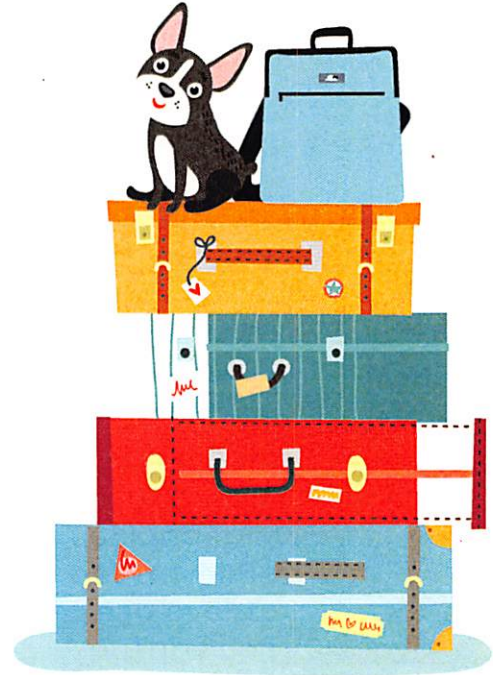
How and when to use a safety tether

Use the safety tether when traveling to unfamiliar place like the vet's office or at the airport.

Never use a safety tether when your pet is restrained in a vehicle.

A safety tether should be used with your pet's walking harness and never with an I.D. collar.

Looking for more pet travel tips? Head over to [YouTube.com/Sleepypod](https://www.youtube.com/Sleepypod) for video tips



PET HYDRATION TIPS WHEN TRAVELING

Keeping a pet hydrated is an important but sometimes tricky endeavor when traveling. The change in routine or excitement can sometimes affect a pet's water intake.

Here are a few tips to keep them happy, healthy and hydrated. Freeze water before traveling:

Start with a good quality travel bowl. Avoid metal dishes as these can heat up in warm weather. Then simply freeze fresh water in the bowl and grab it as you head out the door. As the ice melts, your pet will have continuous cold water to drink.

Add water to food

Whether you feed dry or wet food, add a little extra water to make it a little soupy than usual.

Make flavored water

Pets that don't like drinking water will often change their tune when adding flavor to it. Try adding juice from a pop-top can of tuna or sardines.

Adding ice cubes can help since many pets like to drink cool water.

Pack a straw or oral syringe

If your pet refuses to drink or eat its soupy food, you can use an oral syringe or a drinking straw to squirt some water in your pet's cheek pouch. Don't squirt it down the pet's throat as it may cause your pet to vomit, causing further dehydration.



Safe Travels!

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