

## Big Trips With Little Dogs

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If you are considering traveling overseas with your Norwich or Norfolk, here are some tips to make your adventure easier. Traveling with a dog requires additional effort both to prepare, and to make the actual trip.

When people ask why we travel with our two Norwiches, we explain: (1) our dogs love to explore new places and meet new people – they thrive on the stimulation; (2) they are happier with us than with pet-sitters; (3) we miss them when we are separated; (4) dogs are wonderful ice-breakers to meet new people in other countries – especially attractive small dogs like Norwiches and Norfolks!

### Well Before the Big Trip

- Begin by considering your dog's overall health and temperament: is this something you can safely do with your dog? Please **check with your Veterinarian** to find out if there are any health or other concerns that may make overseas travel with your dog inadvisable.
- If you have never traveled by air with your dog, do not make an overseas flight your first experiment! Book a **short domestic flight** and see how he does with that. An hour in an airplane will give you a good sense of how your dog handles air travel, and is good practice for you and your dog. The same advice applies to staying in a hotel. Not all dogs are necessarily good travelers; and if your dog does not care for it, neither of you will have a good time. Also, as with anything, practice and rehearsal can help an awkward first experience evolve into something enjoyable.
- Find out the **pet importation requirements** to bring your pet into the countries you wish to visit. The US embassies of these countries will have the information (often on their websites). Also, the country's Department of Agriculture will also often post on-line animal importation requirements. Many European countries (including France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom) will allow healthy, vaccinated pets to enter their borders IF you have made the proper preparations. Requirements do change occasionally, so check them out before every trip abroad, both before you book your trip and then immediately before you travel. Although airline personnel may offer advice on pet importation requirements, they may be incorrect: only rely on official government sources.
  - Some countries/destinations do have quarantines or special requirements limiting pet entry. For example: Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, and others. So be sure to check importation requirements carefully before making any unrefundable reservations!
- For the big trip, book a **direct flight** if possible, or break the trip into more than one flying day – try to minimize the time your dog must spend confined to his carrier.
- Find out your dog's **flight options**. Small pets can travel in-cabin on many airlines and flights, but some airlines require pets travel in the cargo hold (this may be a standard requirement, or it may be only on certain flights such as transatlantic flights). Generally speaking, I believe it is better to have your dog with you at all times: this minimizes the risk of your dog being lost in transit, and it is more reassuring to him if he is with you. If your dog travels cargo, there is the risk of "lost baggage" (this happened to a friend who was required to travel with his Maltese, Fred, in cargo – it was traumatic for both of them when the airline sent Fred to the wrong destination).
- If you want your dog to **fly in the airplane cabin** with you:
  - Book your flights well in advance of your desired travel dates (I suggest at least 4 months ahead). Most airlines limit the number of pets that can travel in-cabin, by

class, depending on the size of the airplane. For example, a large airplane may allow one pet in first class, one pet in business class, and two pets in economy; a smaller plane may only allow one pet total. These in-cabin pet reservations are first-come, first-serve. If you combine the in-cabin pet restrictions with using frequent-flier miles, you may have a very limited selection of travel dates; booking early is critical.

- Make sure the airline has reserved the In-Cabin space for your dog! I call back a day after making the reservations to double-check (and sometimes it has not been properly captured in “the system” the first time).
- You will usually have to pay an “excess baggage” fee for your pet at the time of check-in; find out what the cost will be. Usually you can not pay the fee in advance.
- If you possibly can, travel in business or first class (either purchase that class, or upgrade your ticket). Your dog will have more room and feel less “squashed” – remember, he will be in his carrier bag under the seat in front of you for the duration of the flight.
- Make your **accommodations reservations** well ahead of time. Many (even most) hotels and inns in Europe welcome pets in-room, often for an additional “pet” charge. Make sure that the hotel knows you are bringing a small dog, and find out what the price is in advance.
- Get any **travel equipment** you will need, such as a travel carrier (for in-cabin travel) and/or crate (for travel in airplane cargo holds). Make sure the carrier you have meets the airline’s pet travel baggage requirements, whether it is in-cabin or cargo (contact the airline directly, or check their website).
  - If you travel infrequently, you can borrow a carrier or crate rather than purchase one.
- As appropriate, make plans to have your dog **vaccinated** (per the countries’ pet importation requirements) and **microchipped** (many westernized countries use microchips to identify pets).
- **Familiarize** your dog with the **carrier or crate**. Double-check that he fits comfortably inside, with room to stand up, turn around, and lie down. Let him explore the carrier or crate, and leave some treats inside. Help him form some pleasant associations with it. Carry him around the house inside of it, to get used to your walking with him inside of it.

### Just Before the Big Trip

- **Visit your Veterinarian:**
  - Get a **Health Certificate** from your Veterinarian within the week before you travel. Many countries require the Certificate be within 30 days of your travel date, and so to re-enter the USA, you want the Certificate you left the country with to be within 30 days of your return. Make a copy of the Certificate; put a copy in the dog’s carrier, and put another copy elsewhere in your luggage as a back-up.
  - Note: My understanding is that it is preferable to avoid sedating your dog unless there is a significant problem with anxiety when flying (and in that case, consider leaving the dog at home). If you have this concern, check with your veterinarian about the options, and what is advisable for your dog. Another option to consider is natural treatments such as “Rescue Remedy” (note: I do not have personal experience with this product).
- **Pack** both your bags and your dog’s bags. There is a suggested list of things to pack for your dog at the end of this article.
  - For our upcoming month-long trip to Italy with our Norwiches, we will pack most of their supplies in a crate that we will check-through with the rest of our checked baggage (both dogs travel in-cabin with us). Of course, instead of packing supplies in a crate, you can pack the dog’s items in any type of bag. Make sure you put liquid items (e.g., shampoo, Petzyme) in plastic bags in case they leak.

Food should be packed inside of sturdy plastic bags or containers so that it can not absorb any fumes or chemicals that may be in the cargo hold or on the tarmac (e.g., jet fuel).

### **The Day of the Big Trip**

- Take your dog on a LONG walk before you go to the airport (at least 3 miles, more is even better). This achieves two things to make the hours cooped up in the carrier easier to handle: it will help empty your dog's bowels and bladder, and the exercise will tire the dog out. He may even be able to sleep on the airplane! Plan this long walk into your travel day, to ensure you have ample time for this important task.
- Withhold food and water from the dog for about four hours before the flight, to minimize the discomfort of pressure on his bowels and bladder during the flight.
- Make sure you have the absolute MINIMUM amount of carry-on luggage possible – aim for one very lightweight bag in addition to the dog's carrier (I recommend a "day-pack" type bag, to keep your hands and arms free).
- Your dog will need to stay in his carrier at all times in the airport, so let him out before you enter the terminal for one last potty-break.
- At check-in:
  - Many airlines will require you to present the Veterinary Certificate of Health.
  - Pay the "excess baggage" fee when you check in. (If dog is traveling in-cabin, when you board the plane the attendants will sometimes ask to see the receipt.)
  - If your dog is flying in the cargo hold, you will say good-bye to him at check-in.
- If your dog is flying in-cabin with you, you will take him through the security check with you. When you get to the security station, security personnel will ask you to remove your dog from his carrier. Take the dog out and, if he seems agitated, clip his leash onto his collar and make sure it is looped around your wrist (if he is calm, leash may not be necessary). The carrier will go through the x-ray machine; you will step through the security gate with the dog in your arms. Then you will put the dog back into his carrier. Have a treat handy; he may prefer staying in your arms to getting back into the carrier. (Take the leash off when the dog is in the carrier.)
- While waiting in the terminal for your flight, you are not supposed to take your dog out of the carrier. However, if you have a long wait for your flight, and you want to hold your dog in your arms or lap, sometimes you can do this in the waiting area if your dog is calm and you are discreet. However, if your dog is not calm or people ask you to replace him in the carrier, another option is to go into a restroom stall for a while (not glamorous, but it can allow you to give your dog some snuggle-time).

### **In the Air: for the In-Cabin Traveler**

- At take-off and landing, I slowly feed the dog small treats – I recommend having some special treats handy. Airplanes are noisiest at these times, and the sensations of rapid ascent and descent may be uncomfortable. If the dog is anxious, normally appealing regular treats may be ignored, so I like to have special treats in a ziplock baggie (I recommend Nutro Training Bits and Nutro Chicken & Rice Sticks, broken into small pieces – no dog can resist these soft, chewy, aromatic treats, it seems).
- Be calm; our dogs are highly sensitive to our moods. If you are anxious, then he may think there is something he ought to be anxious about, too! If your dog does appear anxious, be reassuring (you can speak to him at all times, and you can pet him in his carrier most times).
- Airline regulations require you to keep the dog in his carrier the entire flight. This mandatory time in the carrier is added to the time he must be in his carrier inside of the airports. (Note: some other countries' airports allow the dogs out on a leash inside of the terminal, e.g., Charles de Gaulle airport in France). Remember that your dog is able to go without food, water, and potty-breaks all night, every night – the trip you are now taking is similar to that length of time.

- If you are unusually lucky, a flight attendant may indicate s/he is willing to “look the other way,” and if your neighbors are also overtly dog-friendly, you may be able to discreetly hold the dog on your lap under a blanket (I carry a cotton receiving blanket with me in case this can happen, since most folks would object to an airplane blanket being used). But make sure to check with the flight attendant and your fellow passengers first! (Keep the dog leashed, and the leash attached to your wrist – getting loose in the airplane would be a nightmare for you and him.)
- If keeping your dog on your lap is not permitted (the most likely scenario), do not open the carrier to let the dog “see out” – he will think the opportunity to poke his head out is an invitation to wriggle out all the way. You will likely have a struggle on your hands to get his head back into the carrier. It is kinder to your dog to keep the carrier closed, or open only enough to admit your hand inside to pet him, and give him ice chips and food.
- Occasionally give the dog ice chips, and gently mist his face with an atomizer (the Evian spray mist is very gentle) so he doesn’t get dehydrated. (Squirt bottles may be unpleasant to your dog, make sure it is a gentle mist.)
- About three hours before landing, begin offering small amounts of food; then let him eat a meal about an hour before landing.
- Your dog may refuse to urinate or defecate until he is outside of the airport; some dogs will “hold it.” (Mine do.)
- Other dogs don’t “hold it,” so it can be helpful to line the dog’s carrier with a “puppy pad” (house-training pad, like a big square of diaper material). Then, if the dog does urinate or defecate, you can change this out in a restroom, similar to changing a baby’s diaper. It is advisable to bring pet-wipes and an extra puppy pad with you on the airplane. (Also, pack some extra puppy pads for the return trip.)
- When you arrive, it will take time for checked baggage to arrive on the carousel. If your dog flew in-cabin with you, this may be a good opportunity to take him out of the terminal for a potty-break (e.g. outside where the taxis are waiting). Concrete-jungle airports are noisy and not conducive to potty-breaks, but by now your dog may be willing to try!

### **On Foreign Soil**

- Keep your dog as well-groomed and hygienically clean as you keep yourself – this means frequent combing, baths, breath mints. An obviously clean, non-shedding, fresh-smelling dog will be much more welcome everywhere you go. Carry a comb, pet-wipes, and breath mints at all times to handle any grooming emergencies. (In France, our Norwich would rub his cheeks in goose-poop at any opportunity – which is not a problem I have here at home!)
- Keep your dog very well-exercised throughout the trip. If there isn’t already an adage that “tired dogs are good dogs,” there should be! Super-charged or bored, restless terriers are more likely to get rambunctious somewhere you’d prefer calmness, or to misbehave.
- Monitor your dog, and ensure he is well-behaved. We are guests in the countries we are visiting, and so we should use our “company manners.” In every circumstance, we are ambassadors for why pet travel is a good thing. If your dog is having a behavior problem, pick him up and remove him from the situation. If your dog damages any property, arrange to make restitution immediately. Be considerate of your dog’s impact on others, even if it means inconveniencing yourself.
- Be willing to alter your travel plans if needed for your pet’s well-being, or for the comfort of people around you. For example: If you discover your dog barks when you leave him alone in the hotel room, then don’t leave him alone in the hotel room. Arrange for a sitter or find a way to bring the dog with you.

## What to Bring

### Required:

- Veterinary Certificate of Health** (keep one copy with the dog's carrier, and one copy stowed elsewhere in your luggage)
- Store somewhere safe in your luggage: a record of your pet's **microchip number**, and major **medical history**.
- Your **Veterinarian's contact** information, should there be a medical emergency you wish to consult with your Vet about.
- If flying in-cabin, a **pet carrier** that meets airline's requirements for size
- If flying in cargo-hold, a **crate** that meets airline's cargo requirements
- A good **photograph** of your dog – in case he gets lost
- At least one **leash**
- Collar and tags** (your dog should wear these at all times, in case of an "escape"). (You might get a special tag for travel with your travel contact information – e.g., cell phone number – and the addition of "U.S.A." to the address, as well as your home phone shown as the international long-distance number.)
- Any **medications** your dog requires
- Enough **food** for the entire time you will be gone
- Plastic **bowls** for food and water
- Treats**. For the airplane ride, I recommend a special treat such as the soft and chewy Nutro Training Bits and Nutro Chicken & Rice Sticks, broken into ultra-small pieces. For the rest of the trip, bring your dog's usual favorite treats or biscuits.
- Breath mints** (recommend D.D.S. Doggie Dental Solutions "8 in 1 Extra Strength Breath Mints")
- Something to **chew** on – alleviates anxiety. I highly recommend Nylabone "Homestyle Diner Edibles" chops and bacon shaped/flavored chews – but avoid carrot (stains things orange), and egg, cheese (dogs dislike). Greenies are also good, however they vanish quickly, after only 5 – 10 minutes of chewing.
- A few favorite **toys**
- A travel **bed**
- Comb** (and **brush**, if packing space is not a concern)
- Shampoo** (Some Norwich/Norfolk owners are anti-shampoo, which is believed to harm the harsh coat. However when traveling, your dog will be much more welcome in hotels and other places if he is clean. Some shampoos keep a harsh coat OK; we use 'Groomax Premium Shampoo.')
- Pet-wipes** (moistened towelettes, like baby-wipes)
- Paper towels**  
A carpet- and **fabric-cleaning product** (I recommend Petzyme, which cleans pet waste – urine, feces, vomit – enzymatically. I have tried it on many surfaces and it has never damaged the carpet or fabric. It does a great job removing accidents, should they occur.)
- Large **towel** (to hold muddy dog in lap; and to dry wet dog). Microfiber is good for space and weight. I keep one in the rental car (for after muddy romps or rainy walks) at all times, and one in the hotel room (for after baths).
- Plastic bags** for waste. (I recommend "Bags on Board," with dispenser that attaches to the leash.) If you are traveling in France, this is actually optional. I did "bag-it" in France although mostly the French do not ordinarily pick up after their dogs, and consider it unclean to do so.
- Atomizer** to mist dog's face while in-flight. Note: do not "squirt" water in your dog's face – dogs dislike this! The idea is to moisturize his eyes, nose, and facial fur a little bit, not to make him uncomfortable. For a gentle mist, I recommend Evian Spray Mist ("Mineral water in a spray mist for rehydration... Especially effective for air travel. Evian refreshes and revitalizes your face and skin.") Alternately you can use any atomizer bottle set to a fine mist.

- **Flashlight** (for pre-bedtime walks in unfamiliar dark towns & countryside). Recommend a hands-free light; many sporting goods stores sell headlamps for campers/packers. This is a flashlight you wear on your forehead, and the light is automatically directed wherever you look. A hands-free flashlight makes it easier to juggle the leash and bags for waste pick-up.

**Optional:**

- Line your dog's in-cabin carrier with a "**Puppy Pad**" (house-training pad, similar to diaper material). Bring an extra Puppy Pad with you to replace the one in the carrier if it becomes soiled. Pack some Puppy Pads in your baggage for the flight home.
- Cotton "**receiving blanket**." These small, thin blankets/big towels are good for cuddling your dog in the airport or on the airplane (if attendants will allow you to take your dog out of the carrier), and can also be used as the dog's travel bed, or as a travel lap-rug with a dirty dog. You can purchase receiving blankets in baby-supply departments (often in pastel colors, but sometimes in other shades). Alternately, a large bath-sheet works, but these are usually too bulky for easy travel.
- A **front-dog-carrier** (ours is made by Outward Hound – the Pet-a-Roo – and is terrific. It allows the dog to sit comfortably at your tummy/chest (like a baby carrier), which is good for when you're in crowds (like an outdoor market) where your dog might be stepped on, or in stores where behavior control is key. Allows you to take the dog places you would be barred from otherwise.)
- A **crate** if your dog is crate-trained. If your dog is flying in-cabin with you, you can use the crate to pack his other supplies, and check the crate through.
- **Safety car seats** if you will be traveling by car.

If you do go overseas with your Norwich or Norfolk, have a wonderful time! Our dogs have appreciated the experience of traveling, and clearly enjoy the new sights and smells, sounds and food. You may see your dog romping in fields of red poppies in Provence, or being offered wedges of duck sausage and foie gras by stallkeepers in the open-air market of medieval Sarlat. You may even find that returning to America may be a bit of a let-down, after some of the more dog-friendly European cultures such as France. "Bone Voyage!"