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Flying with Rabbits & Cavies

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GENERAL INFORMATION & REFERENCE GUIDE

Airline Shipping 101



Airline Tips & Info

Preparing for Travel to Nationals & Conventions

With the ARBA Convention on the horizon and Nationals shows taking place throughout the US in the spring driving to these shows can be time consuming and unfeasible, some of us turn to air travel to help get us and our rabbits and cavies there. I have flown with rabbits to ARBA Conventions and National shows countless times since I began showing rabbits in 1986. It can be done, and the process usually goes quite smoothly, so you and your rabbits can reach your destination in hours instead of days. I have personally used each of the options below multiple times.

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Airline Transport Methods

In-Cabin, Excess Baggage, Air Cargo

#1 "In-Cabin" *Best for 1-2 Rabbits*

If you are taking 1-2 rabbits with you, the pet in cabin option is a good one. They travel at your feet in a soft sided carrier in place of a carry-on bag for an additional fee of around \$125.00 each way. Frontier Airlines, United Airlines, and Alaska Airlines all allow rabbits to travel in cabin. Frontier Airlines allows you to book online at flyfrontier.com at the same time you book your personal reservation. United Airlines and Alaska Airlines allow you to book the rabbits via their 800 reservation line at the same time you book your ticket or call after you have booked online. Please note that only Frontier Airlines allows caviaries as In Cabin Pets.

#2 "Excess or Checked Baggage" *Best for Multiple Rabbits*

When traveling with multiple rabbits and you are flying to/from a destination that Alaska Airlines flies then flying your rabbits as checked/excess baggage is a great option. Alaska Airlines is one of the only airlines allowing rabbits to fly as excess baggage. They require that the transport carriers are inside a dog crate and that the crate is closed with screws and bolts, not cable ties. Rabbits as excess baggage is booked through the Alaska Airlines reservation line at the time of making your own reservation. A health certificate is required and should be dated within 10 days of travel. Rabbits are checked at the ticket counter with your luggage and then you accompany the rabbits to TSA where the kennel is inspected and sometimes opened for inspection.

#3 "Air Cargo" *Best for Rabbits, Caviaries, and Most Animals*

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Airline Reservations & Info

Alaska, Delta, and American Airlines Info



RESERVATIONS

800-252-7522

WEB

alaskaair.com/content/travel-info/policies/pets-traveling-with-pets?lid=nav:info-pets

Alaska reservations can be booked through Alaska Cargo reservations 24 hrs to 35 days prior to travel. A health certificate dated within 10 days of travel is required. A cold weather acclimation statement is highly recommended.



RESERVATIONS

800-DL-CARGO (1-800-352-2746)

WEB

deltacargo.com/Cargo/

Reservations can be booked online at deltacargo.com or through Delta Cargo reservations. Reservations are accepted only 14 days prior to travel. A veterinary signed health certificate is required and must include an acclimation statement such as "The rabbits contained in this shipment are acclimated to temperatures between 80F and 20F and are fit for air travel" Delta has a PET rate which will only allow you to book a kennel/transport carrier size equivalent to a 300 series kennel (32" x 22.5" x 24") or smaller. To receive a more competitive rate and not have a kennel size restriction, be sure NOT to check the "Pet In Household" checkbox when booking online, and if booking via phone – politely tell the reservationist that you are not shipping household pets. By doing so the rate code is changed to that of a breeder/commercial rate which is lower and it allows you to book any size kennel!



RESERVATIONS

800-433-7300

WEB

aa.com/i18n/travel-info/special-assistance/pets.jsp

American Airlines: reservations can be booked via American Airlines Cargo reservations up to 10 days prior to departure. A health certificate dated within 10 days of travel along with a letter of acclimation for temperatures below 45 degrees is required. This form is available at aacargo.com and requires a veterinary signature. They will not allow animals to fly over 85 degrees or below 20 degrees. I would recommend that your vet include an acclimation statement on the health certificate as well.

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Airline Regulations

IATA Live Animal Regulations (LAR)



TRAVEL & CARGO

877-734-2826

WEB

iata.org/en/programs/cargo/live-animals/

The regulations that set the rules for animals traveling by air is set by IATA not by the airlines themselves. However, the regulations can be confusing and loosely stated which leaves some of the container requirements open to interpretation by the cargo office. When in doubt I recommend visiting your local cargo office and asking which container method they prefer. I personally have used both methods (transport carriers & transport carriers in a dog crate) on all 3 airlines, recently and have had no issues.

When you ship your rabbits, they will not accept your dolly as part of shipment, so plan to send it as baggage on your flight. I also strongly recommend no hay and to use puppy pads instead of shavings in trays. Make sure your kennel and/or carrier cages are clean and in good shape. We want to make a good impression on the cargo representatives that our rabbits are clean and not in disarray. Also, be courteous. You will likely be stressed with the events of getting ready to depart, but if the process goes longer than you planned, or an agent is double checking guidelines, just be courteous and confident.

International shipments are a totally different ballgame and are not included in this article, but we hope they will be added to the HLRSC archive soon.

REFERENCE GUIDE

Airlines that Accept Rabbits In-Cabin:

- Alaska Airlines
- Frontier Airlines – Accepts Cavies – can book online at flyfrontier.com
- United Airlines

Airlines that Accept Rabbits & Cavies as Excess Baggage:

- Alaska Airlines
 - Transport Carriers must be in a Dog Crate
 - Health Certificate Required

Airlines that Accept Rabbits & Cavies as Air Cargo:

- Alaska Airlines
 - Book 24hrs to 35 days in advance
 - Health Certificate
 - Cold weather acclimation certificate recommended
- Delta Airlines
 - Book up to 14 days in advance
 - Health Certificate Health Certificate Required
 - Acclimation statement on health certificate required
 - Temperature Restrictions above 80 and below 20 degrees
 - To receive a cheaper rate and to remove kennel size restrictions, do not check the “Pet in Household” checkbox when booking online or specify that the rabbits/cavies are not “Pet in Household” when booking over the phone.
- American Airlines
 - Book up to 10 days in advance
 - Health Certificate Required
 - Requires an Acclimation Certificate located at aacargo.com
 - Temperature Restrictions above 85 degrees and below 20



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