



THE LABRADOR RESCUE TRUST

ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO TRAVELLING WITH YOUR DOG

If you are going on holiday, please also read Help Sheet 6 – Essential Guide to Taking your Dog on Holiday, and Help Sheet 7 – Essential Guide to Boarding your Dog

General

Your dog's comfort on a journey is essential both for yourself and for your dog. You should let nothing distract the driver during a journey for, if you do, you could put all the people in your vehicle in danger as well as other people on the road. You might also be liable to prosecution under the Road Traffic Act 1988.

You should ensure that your dog has sufficient space and comfort in the vehicle during the journey. For the security of your passengers and of your dog, The Labrador Rescue Trust (TLRT) strongly recommends that you purchase a correctly sized dog cage that will not only be comfortable for your dog but will also keep him safe and secure on today's roads. There are a considerable number of removable cages on the market today to fit most vehicles, particularly estate vehicles. A blanket, rug and/or a rubber mat should be put in the cage to stop the dog from sliding around as the vehicle turns corners. It is also worth considering installing a dog guard, which if fixed properly, will give a measure of protection to both the dog and the human occupants of the vehicle, if you chose not to use a cage.

Should your vehicle not lend itself to installing a cage, then there are several relatively inexpensive dog harnesses/seatbelts on the market that will restrain the dog on the rear seat of the vehicle. Dogs should never be allowed to travel in a vehicle without some form of restraint due to consequential problems during/following a road traffic accident.

Your dog should be able to stand up, sit down and lie down in comfort. Never transport your dog in the boot or loose in the front foot well of your car.

For his comfort on a long journey, you could purchase a 'non-spill' water bowl from which the dog can drink but, if you do not, then it is important to stop occasionally to allow your dog to have a drink. Always carry plenty of fresh drinking water and a bowl in your vehicle with you, particularly if you are travelling on a motorway. Traffic hold-ups in hot weather can be very distressing for your dog and he may need to be cooled down and/or have a drink. It is also essential that you stop occasionally on long journeys in order that your dog can be allowed to relieve himself. And don't forget to clean up after your dog!



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Never leave your dog inside a hot car if you stop for a break. If a short stop is unavoidable, always try and leave the car in the shade with the windows partly open. If you are stuck in traffic in hot weather if possible try and protect your dog from direct sunlight by putting screens on the windows.

All vehicles should be well ventilated and allow plenty of fresh air inside, which will help both you and your dog have a more comfortable journey. Avoid travelling in the heat of the day; consider commencing your journey at night or in the evening or early morning.

Some dogs do not travel well. It can be useful to have towels and clean up materials in the vehicle in case of sickness. Should your dog be sick in your vehicle on a regular basis, and you are embarking on a long journey, discuss possible remedies with your Veterinary Surgeon. It can be useful to give your dog a travel sickness pill (rather than a sedative) an hour or two before you start your journey. Feed your dog as far in advance of the journey as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to consider waiting until you arrive at your destination before feeding.

If your dog is not used to travelling in a vehicle, accustom your dog gradually by taking him on short journeys at first. Remember that when your dog is in a vehicle on a road, it is deemed to be in a public place. Therefore, make sure that your dog wears a collar with an identification tag clearly showing your current contact details which should contain your name and address.

We recommend that all dogs are microchipped as this can be most useful for identification purposes should your dog stray. However, this is not an alternative to your dog wearing a collar and tag in a public place as a collar and tag is essential in order to comply with the Control of Dogs Order 1992. It is also useful to take regular photographs of your dog as these can provide a useful way of describing your dog should he become lost, as well as for use on posters for lost pets.

Never leave your dog unattended in a vehicle for long periods of time or in hot weather. It takes just minutes for a dog to die from heatstroke.

These Information Sheets are intended to serve as a guideline to new homes and foster homes. They are the result of many years of experience from our helpers and we hope that they provide a useful insight. Please note that these are only guidelines and The Labrador Rescue Trust, its helpers and officers make clear that it is the responsibility of each home/foster home to recognise the needs of their dog and to react to those needs. The Trust, its helpers and officers cannot be held responsible for the behaviour of any individual dog.

THE LABRADOR RESCUE TRUST COMPANY

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Registered Office: The Old Mill, Park Road, Shepton Mallet BA4 5BS

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