

The Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) European Union countries - dogs and cats

This fact sheet replaces fact sheet 3 dated October 2005. European Regulation 998/2003 took effect on 3 July 2004. It sets out the rules for pet animals travelling between European Union (EU) countries and into the EU from other countries.

In this fact sheet, “pet” refers to a dog or cat and includes assistance dogs.

This fact sheet explains how to prepare a dog or cat resident in the EU to travel within the EU under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) with an EU pet passport. EU countries are listed in part 3.

Important Webpages

Travel Routes and Transport Companies:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/procedures/support-info/routes_europe.htm

EU Recognised Blood-Testing Laboratories:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/procedures/support-info/labs.htm>

Dangerous Dogs: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/domestic/dogs.htm>

Dangerous Wild Animals, including Wolf-Dog Hybrids and Bengal Cats:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/PETS/dangerousdogs.htm>

Quarantine:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/quarantine/qindex.htm>

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) PETS

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm>

DEFRA have a special PETS Helpline:

Tel: +44 (0)870 241 1710 (Mon to Fri 9:30am to 6pm, German Time)

Fax: +44 (0)20 7904 6206

Email: pets.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk (please include your address and phone number in the email)

PART 1: THE RULES

From the UK to another EU country:

To travel **from the UK to another EU country**, a pet must be microchipped, vaccinated against rabies and issued with an EU pet passport. Some EU countries have additional requirements.

Entering the UK from Germany:

To **enter the UK from Germany or other EU countries** without quarantine a pet must, **in this order**, be microchipped, vaccinated against rabies **and** blood tested. It must also be issued with an EU pet passport and treated against ticks and tapeworms.

Your pet must not have been outside any of the countries listed in part 3 in the 6 calendar months immediately before travelling to the UK and must enter the UK using an approved transport company and route (*see part 3c*).

- ***The 6 month rule for entering the UK***

Your pet may not enter the UK under PETS until 6 calendar months have passed from the date that a vet took the blood sample which gave a satisfactory test result. The date the blood sample was taken is shown in section V of the passport which the vet must complete (*see part 2, steps 3 and 4*).

Your pet requires only one blood test and 6 calendar month wait **provided** all subsequent rabies booster vaccinations are given by the required date. This wait is necessary because an animal infected with rabies *before* vaccination would not be protected by the vaccine. Six months is the time needed for most infected animals to display any clinical signs of the disease.

The rules are to protect human and animal health and to reduce the risk of importing rabies into the UK. Animals not meeting all the rules must be licensed into quarantine.

- ***Where PETS procedures can be carried out***

Your pet can be fitted with a microchip in any country. Rabies vaccinations, blood sampling, the tick and tapeworm treatment and issuing of documents must all be carried out in either the UK or any of the listed countries.

PART 2: PREPARING YOUR DOG OR CAT

Use the checklist at the Annex as you follow the steps.

Step 1: The microchip

Your pet must first be fitted with a microchip. We recommend that it meets ISO Standard 11784 or ISO Standard 11785. If the microchip does not meet one of these Standards you **must** provide a reader that can read the microchip number at the time of any inspection.

Ask the person fitting the microchip to check that its number can be read before and after it has been fitted. Get your vet to read the microchip every time you visit.

Step 2: The rabies vaccination

- ***When to vaccinate***

Pets being prepared to enter or re-enter the UK must be vaccinated in accordance with the recommendation of the vaccine manufacturer's data sheet.. They must be vaccinated **after** a microchip has been fitted. Get the vet to read the microchip number before the vaccination.

If your pet was vaccinated *before* the microchip was fitted, it will have to be vaccinated again. This is to make sure that it is correctly identified when vaccinated .

- ***Vaccination record***

When your pet is vaccinated, make sure that the vet accurately records the following details on its vaccination record and passport:

- its date of birth/age
- the microchip number, date of insertion and its location in the animal
- the date of vaccination
- the vaccine manufacturer, product name and batch number
- the date by which the booster vaccination must be given (i.e. the "Valid until" date). This date is calculated by reference to the validity period of the vaccine given in the vaccine manufacturer's data sheet.

- ***Booster vaccinations***

After your pet has been vaccinated and blood tested with a satisfactory result, it will need booster vaccinations. These **must** be given by the "Valid until" date in section IV of the passport or on the PETS certificate and be recorded on the vaccination record and in section IV of the passport.

If the booster date is missed, your pet will have to be vaccinated and blood tested again. The 6 month rule will apply from the date the new blood sample is taken, provided the result is satisfactory. A vet (in Great Britain a Local Veterinary Inspector (LVI)) must complete the second box in section V of the passport.

Step 3: The blood test

After being vaccinated, your pet must have a blood test to make sure that the vaccine has worked. Your vet will tell you the best time to do this and will take a blood sample to be analysed at an EU-approved laboratory. Take your pet's vaccination record with you when the blood sample is taken. Ask your vet to read the microchip and to give you a signed record of the date the sample was taken that accurately shows your pet's microchip number.

A satisfactory blood test result will show that the rabies antibody titre was equal to or more than 0.5IU/ml. Make sure your vet gives you a certified copy of the result, accurately showing the microchip number and the date the sample was taken, and keep it safe.

Your pet requires only one satisfactory blood test and 6 calendar months wait **provided** the subsequent rabies booster vaccinations are given by the required date. See step 2 if the date is missed.

If your pet fails its blood test it must be blood tested again. Your vet will advise if it first needs to be revaccinated. The 6 month rule will apply.

Step 4: Documentation

After your pet has passed its blood test you must get an EU pet passport. In Germany you can get a passport after your pet has been microchipped and vaccinated against rabies.

The passport will show that your pet has been microchipped, vaccinated against rabies and had a satisfactory blood test. To enter the UK, it must also show a current treatment for ticks and tapeworms at the time of return (see *step 5*).

How to get a passport

In Great Britain, the passport is issued by an LVI. If your veterinary practice does not have a resident LVI, your vet may be able to tell you where the nearest one works. Your local Animal Health Divisional Office can also provide these details. DEFRA does not charge vets for the passport.

In other EU countries, a vet will issue the passport.

When you go to get the passport take your pet, its vaccination record and blood test result (if appropriate). The documents must show your pet's microchip number. Also take evidence of the date your pet was microchipped. Make sure that the vet correctly completes sections I to IV of the passport and V if necessary.

- ***Using the passport to enter the UK***

A passport may not be used enter the UK under PETS until 6 calendar months have passed from the date the blood sample that gave a satisfactory test result was taken. You can continue to use the passport to enter the UK **provided** your pet is revaccinated by the "Valid until" date in section IV (see *step 2 if the date is missed*).

- ***Replacing the passport***

When the passport is full, you should apply to a vet (in Great Britain an LVI) for a new one. Take the full passport and your pet with you.

Keep the passport safe because the transport company checking your pet will need to see it. If you lose the passport you may obtain a new one by producing your pet's vaccination record and blood test result, both of which must show your pet's microchip number.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have an EU pet passport for your pet to enter the UK. Make sure that it is correctly completed and your pet meets all the rules. If you do not, your pet may not be able to enter the country or may have to be licensed into quarantine on arrival. This will mean delay and cost you money.

Step 5: Treatment against parasites

Before your pet can enter the UK, it must be treated against ticks and tapeworms. Any vet in the EU can give the treatment. You must not do it yourself. Make sure the vet reads your pet's microchip before treatment.

Your pet must be treated **between 24 and 48 hours before being checked-in** with an approved transport company to travel into the UK. The treatment must be given every time your pet travels to the UK.

If you are taking your pet abroad from the UK on a day trip, it will need to be treated in the UK between 24 and 48 hours before it is checked in for the **return** journey.

The product used for the tapeworm treatment must contain *praziquantel*.

The product used for the tick treatment must be licensed for use against ticks and have a marketing authorisation in the country of use. Tick collars are not acceptable.

The treatments are to stop the tapeworm *Echinococcus multilocularis* and certain ticks entering the UK. These parasites can carry diseases which can infect other animals and humans causing illness and sometimes death.

- ***Recording the treatment***

After the treatment, the vet must fill in sections VI and VII of the EU pet passport.

The *date* and *time* of treatment (using the 24 hour clock), the name of the product used and its manufacturer must be shown. The vet must also stamp and sign the passport. Make sure all these details are correctly recorded before you leave the vet.

PART 3: TRAVELLING TO THE UK

(a) EU countries and territories

Pets that come from any of these countries can enter the UK under PETS. Pets must not have been outside any of the EU or non-EU listed countries in the 6 calendar months before travelling to the UK.

Austria	Faroe Islands	Ireland ³	Poland
Azores	Finland	Italy	Portugal
Balearic Islands	France	Latvia	Réunion
Belgium	French Guiana	Lithuania	Slovakia
Canary Islands	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Ceuta	Gibraltar	Madeira	Spain
Cyprus ¹	Greece	Malta	Sweden
Czech Republic	Greenland	Martinique	
Denmark	Guadeloupe ²	Melilla	
Estonia	Hungary	Netherlands	

¹ Dogs and cats can prepared for PETS in, or returning under PETS to the UK from, the Republic of Cyprus may enter or re-enter the UK without quarantine. All animals travelling from Northern (Turkish) Cyprus will have to be licensed into quarantine for 6 months on arrival in the UK. This must be arranged before the animal travels. See the website or contact the Helpline to check for any change in this situation.

² Includes St Barthelemy and St Martin (French part of the island)

³ There are no requirements for pets travelling directly between the UK and the Republic of Ireland

Owners of pets entering the Channel Islands or the Republic of Ireland from outside the British Isles should contact the appropriate authorities in those countries for advice on approved routes and any other requirements.

(b) Non-EU listed countries

See fact sheet 4 for details of bringing your pet from the countries below into the UK under PETS.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/factsheet/eufactsheet4a.pdf>

Andorra	Cayman Islands	Mauritius	St Vincent
Antigua & Barbuda	Chile	Mayotte	San Marino
Argentina	Croatia	Mexico	Singapore
Aruba	Falkland Islands	Monaco	Switzerland
Ascension Island	Fiji	Montserrat	Taiwan
Australia	French Polynesia	Netherlands Antilles	Trinidad & Tobago
Bahrain	Grenadines	New Caledonia	United Arab Emirates
Barbados	Guam	New Zealand	USA (mainland)
Belarus	Hawaii	Norway	Vanuatu
Bermuda	Hong Kong	Romania	Vatican
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Iceland	Russian Federation	Wallis & Futuna
British Virgin Islands	Jamaica ¹	St Helena	
Bulgaria	Japan	St Kitts & Nevis	
Canada	Liechtenstein	St Pierre & Miquelon	

¹ Jamaican law as at October 2004 prevents their involvement in PETS. See the website or contact the Helpline to check for any change in this situation.

(c) How to travel

You must use one of the routes and transport companies on the EU route list http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/procedures/support-info/routes_europe.htm to bring your pet into the UK under the Scheme from another EU country.

If there is no authorised route from your country you may travel to another EU country and enter on a listed route from there. In this case, the tick and tapeworm treatment must be given before you check in for the final stage of your journey.

Pets travelling by ferry or rail must accompany passengers with a vehicle unless otherwise shown on the list. On most air routes, pets will travel as cargo but some airlines allow registered assistance dogs to travel in the cabin. The route list gives details.

Routes may change and new ones may be added. For the latest information, see the PETS website:
http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/procedures/support-info/routes_europe.htm
or ring the PETS Helpline. Some routes are seasonal or irregular so check availability with the transport company.

Check your pet's travel arrangements with the company as they may have their own conditions of travel. Check the costs, requirements and procedures before booking your journey to the UK.

If travelling by air, you may need to arrange with the transport company for the passport to accompany your pet. (You may wish to keep a copy for reference).

If your pet enters the UK with an unapproved transport company or on an unauthorised route, you will need to arrange for it to be licensed into quarantine on arrival with a view to obtaining its early release. If it can be shown that your pet meets all the necessary requirements of the Scheme it can be released within a few working days. See **(d)** below.

(d) Early release from quarantine

Any pet entering the UK which does not meet all the Scheme rules must be licensed into quarantine. It may be released from the date it can be shown to comply with the rules. To license your pet into quarantine, you must get an import licence from Defra (for England), SEERAD (for Scotland), NAWDEPC (for Wales) or DARD (for Northern Ireland) before it travels to the UK. Part 6 gives contact details. The licence must accompany your pet when it travels. You must meet the costs of quarantine.

(e) Travel charges

Transport companies will usually include travel, checking and handling charges in the ticket price for your pet. Check when you make your booking. No charges are made by Defra or the Devolved Authorities.

PART 4: THE PETS CHECK

Before you board a Eurotunnel train or a ferry travelling to the UK on an authorised route, you must present your pet to transport staff so that its microchip and official documentation can be checked. Guide dogs travelling on Eurostar will be checked on arrival at Waterloo station.

After a satisfactory check, pet owners travelling by Eurotunnel or ferry will be given a badge or sticker which should be displayed as instructed by the transport company staff. This should not be removed until you have left the port of arrival in the UK.

If your pet fails the check, it will not be allowed to travel until the problem has been resolved unless you arrange for it to enter quarantine in the UK.

For pets travelling by air, the check will be carried out on arrival in the UK by staff at the Animal Reception Centre.

Your pet may be subject to a further official check by DEFRA or SEERAD after it has been checked by the Transport Company. This is for quality assurance purposes.

If your pet fails the check, it will either have to go into quarantine or be re-exported. If a pet arriving by air has failed only because it has not met the rules on tick and tapeworm treatment, it must be treated on arrival and then held for 24 hours after treatment. If the animal arrives at Heathrow, this can be done there. In all other cases it must be done at local quarantine premises. If it is treated in quarantine, you will have to seek approval for its early release (part 3d).

PART 5: PETS IN THE UK AND ABROAD

(a) Dangerous animals

It is illegal to possess certain types of dogs in the UK. It is important to note the word “type”, as none of the prohibited dogs are recognised breeds in Great Britain. The terms of section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act (DDA) make it clear that it applies not only to “pure” Pit Bull Terriers but also to any dog of the type known as the Pit Bull Terrier.

Whether section 1 of the DDA applies to any particular cross will depend on whether the resulting dog is of the prohibited type - that is to say, whether it has the **physical and behavioural characteristics of the prohibited type**. Remember that the characteristics are essential in deciding whether or not the dog is prohibited. Not all Pit Bull Terriers will be described as a Pit Bull Terrier by their owner. Some owners may deliberately misrepresent the breed of their dog using terms such as **American Staffordshire Terriers (Am Staffs or ASTs), American Bulldogs and the Presa Canaria**.

Other names used to describe the Pit Bull Terrier types may be **Irish Staffordshire Bull Terriers** (not to be confused with a Staffordshire Bull Terrier bred in Ireland), **Old Fashioned Staffords or Traditional Staffords**. There are likely to be other names being used by people breeding fighting dogs.

If a person arriving in this produces paperwork that purports to prove that the dog is not a prohibited type it is necessary for the authorities to be cautious. Paperwork accompanying the dog should be detailed and comprehensive.

Owners should be aware that if the dog displays the defining characteristics that are represented in the prohibited types the dog could be seized and its fate decided by the courts irrespective of the paperwork. It is therefore necessary to be very cautious when buying a dog that is not Kennel Club registered particularly if you are considering bringing a dog to the UK from overseas.

If there is any doubt as to whether the dog in question could be considered to be of the prohibited type, the advice is NOT to bring it into the UK.

This is an excerpt from the DEFRA publication *Types of dogs prohibited in Great Britain*. For more detailed information please click here for the full Pdf document <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/welfare/domestic/ddogsleaflet.pdf> or telephone Defra on 020 7904 6910. Contact points for SEERAD and DARD are given in part 6. If you bring one of these dogs into the UK, you could be prosecuted and the dog seized and destroyed. If in doubt, don't travel with it.

Rules for keeping dangerous wild animals, including wolf-dog hybrids and Bengal cats, can be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/PETS/dangerousdogs.htm>

(b) Dogs in other countries

Some countries may not allow certain types of dog to enter and may have rules on others (e.g. muzzling, maximum size). Before travelling, you are advised to check the rules with the authorities (e.g. the Embassy) of the country you wish to visit.

PART 6: Contacts

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

PETS

- Website: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm
- Helpline: 0870 241 1710 (Monday to Friday - 08.30 to 17.00 UK time)
- E-mail: pets.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk (enclose your postal address and daytime telephone number)
- Fax: +44 (0)1245 351 162

Quarantine

- Website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/quarantine/qindex.htm>
- Telephone: +44 (0)1245 458 739
- E-mail: quarantine@defra.gsi.gov.uk

- Fax: +44 (0)1245 351 162

Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD)

- Telephone: 0131 244 6182/1
- E-mail: animal.health@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
- Fax: 0131 244 6616

National Assembly for Wales Department of Environment, Planning and Countryside (NAWDEPC)

- Telephone: 01286 662027 (English and Welsh)
- E-mail: AnimalByProductsCaernarfon@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland (DARD)

- Telephone: 02890 524622

DACTARI

- Website: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/veterinary/dactari/index.htm

While this fact sheet provides information about the Scheme, it cannot cover every possible situation. Check with one of the contact points above if your questions are not answered by our fact sheets.

Annex

PETS CHECKLIST FOR ENTERING THE UK

Tick the boxes as you complete the steps.

Preparing your pet

Step 1

My pet has been microchipped

I have a microchip reader (only if the microchip is not ISO Standard)

The microchip can be read

Step 2

My pet was vaccinated in accordance with the recommendation of the manufacturer's data sheet.

It was vaccinated after it was fitted with a microchip

The microchip number has been entered correctly by the vet on the vaccination record and passport

Step 3

I have a record from the vet of the date the blood sample was taken, showing the correct microchip number. The blood sample was taken after the vaccination

My pet has had a satisfactory blood test at an EU-approved laboratory

I have a certified copy of the blood test result showing the correct microchip number and the date the blood sample was taken

Step 4

A vet has correctly filled in all the details in sections I-V of the EU pet passport

The passport will be valid for entry to the UK on the date of arrival (i.e. at least 6 calendar months from the date a blood sample was taken from my pet that gave a satisfactory test result)

Step 5

A vet has treated my pet for ticks and tapeworms 24 – 48 hours before it will be checked-in with an approved transport company for its journey into the UK

The vet has correctly filled in sections VI and VII of the passport

Travelling to the UK

I have arranged for my pet to travel to the UK using an approved transport company and route.

(http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/procedures/support-info/routes_europe.htm)

If my pet is entering quarantine, I have obtained an import licence from DEFRA, (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/rabies/id1.pdf>) SEERAD or DARD before travelling.