



Pet Passport

Once the requirements are met, a vet (LVI - Local Veterinary Inspector) from the clinic that is on a special panel nominated by DEFRA can issue the UK Pet passport (**PETS 1**). At the same time we would issue a copy in French (**PETS 5**) that is valid for entry into France.

Will the requirements change?

It is always possible that the entry requirements for different countries will change in the future, and so the following information can only be regarded as a guideline. Clients are advised to check with the clinic, or the DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) Website, before a trip is planned to find out if there have been any changes since the printing of these guidelines.

TRAVELLING ABROAD WITH YOUR PET

What you should know

- The Pet Travel Scheme requires your pet to be microchipped, vaccinated against rabies and blood tested
- Specific worm and tick treatments are necessary before re-entry to UK
- The scheme is applicable to Western Europe and Scandinavia
- Annual rabies booster vaccination is necessary
- Additional documentation may be required
- Regulations change - check before you are planning to travel
- Protection against other diseases is advisable in some countries

Owners may wish to take their pets with them if they move abroad permanently, or may simply wish to take them on a family holiday. Recent changes in the legislation allow re-entry into the UK from Western Europe without quarantine if the animal has a valid "Pet Passport" (the Pet Travel Scheme - PETS for short).

What is a Pet Passport?

The word "pet passport" implies that this is all you need to take your pet anywhere in Europe. In fact, it is really just the entry requirements to come back into the UK to avoid the 6-month quarantine period.

To which countries can I go?

The "Pet Passport" scheme allows traveling in most countries within Western Europe, Scandinavia and the USA and may be extended in the future to other rabies-free islands.

What do I need to do to get a Pet Passport?

The requirements are that the cat or dog must be:

- At least 3 months of age
- Permanently identified using a microchip (this must be of a type meeting the ISO Standard - such as used in our clinic)
- Once identified (and not before), a vaccination against rabies is given
- 30 days after the rabies vaccination is given, a blood sample is taken and submitted to a DEFRA laboratory to confirm that the vaccine has produced immunity. Very rarely, the level of immunity produced is below the acceptable level such that a follow up vaccination and repeat blood test are necessary
- The pet passport can then be issued
- In addition to these requirements, the cat or dog needs to be treated 24 - 48 hours before their return into the UK with a specific worm treatment (Drontal plus® or Drontal cat®) and a specific treatment to kill ticks (Frontline®). This must be done by a registered veterinarian in that country, who will then issue the appropriate certificate.

For how long is it valid?

The “**Pet passport**” is valid for 2 years. The two year period begins 6 months after the date of blood sampling following the effective rabies vaccination.

In the case of dogs, if a rabies booster vaccination is performed within the 2-year period, the **Pet passport** can be extended for a further 2 years without an additional blood test being necessary. If the booster vaccination is not done within the 2-year period, an additional blood test will be necessary, and a further 6-month qualification period will be imposed before the new passport becomes valid.

Cats need rabies boosters every year.

Do I need any other documentation?

Yes. The **Pet Passport** (together with the French version) will allow entry into France and the UK. Other Countries (such as Spain) require an additional export / Health certificate that requires a health check by a nominated DEFRA LVI at the clinic a few days prior to travel. Applications for the appropriate paperwork must be made to DEFRA about 1 month before travel is planned.

Documentation recording the rabies vaccination must be kept. This needs to be on specific certificates (the normal dog / cat vaccination records are not sufficient).

Pets travelling by air may require additional Health certification. In the case of dogs, the certificate will include details of the size of carrying crate appropriate for the size of dog. This must comply with the International Air Transport Authority (IATA) regulations.

Animals travelling to Countries outside Europe may require different certification (see below).

Does quarantine still exist?

Yes. All dogs and cats entering the UK that do not have a valid Pet passport must undergo a period of 6-months quarantine. It is therefore essential that clients ensure all the documentation is valid and correct.

How often should Rabies vaccination be given?

According to the manufacturers’ recommendations (and the Pet Passport guidelines) cats should be given boosters once per year and dogs once every two years. However, most European countries insist on a booster every year in both dogs and cats, and so to avoid problems during your visit, we recommend that annual vaccination be performed for both dogs and cats.

Are there any other diseases you should worry about?

Yes. The requirements of the **Pet passport** are designed to prevent certain diseases (especially rabies) being introduced into the UK, rather than protecting your pet from becoming ill itself. There are some serious life-threatening diseases that are common in some Mediterranean areas of Europe. There is no specific prevention or cure to some (eg Leishmaniasis); the routine use of Stronghold is strongly recommended to prevent Heartworm.

Do non-European Countries have different requirements?

Yes. The specific requirements vary with the individual countries. Australia and New Zealand are especially strict, requiring blood samples to be taken about 1 month before. We recommend you contact the clinic well in advance to ensure the appropriate tests can be done in good time.

Where can I get further information?

Please feel free to contact us at the clinic. In addition, there are two other useful sources of information:

The PETS Helpline: Tel 0870 2411 710 (8.30am - 5pm, Mon - Fri)
e-mail: pets.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
DEFRA Website: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine

