

Health and welfare information about your cat from Vetlexicon Felis.



Passports - rules and regulations

Pet passports are part of the European Union (EU) Regulation on the movement of pet animals. Certain non-EU listed countries may also issue a passport. Since the UK left the EU, Pet passports issued in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) are no longer valid for travel to the EU or Northern Ireland. However, you can use a pet passport if it was issued in Northern Ireland or an EU country.

What regulations are there on pets going abroad?

There is an EU Regulation that sets out the requirements for the movement of pet animals (dogs, cats and ferrets) travelling within the European Community, and into the Community from non-EU countries. The same EU regulation also refers to importation requirements applying to rodents, domestic rabbits, birds (except certain poultry), ornamental tropical fish, invertebrates (except bees and crustaceans), amphibians and reptiles. The Regulation can be downloaded from the European Union (EU) website see: http://europa.eu/travel/pets/index_en.htm.

What do I need for my pet to travel to EU and Northern Ireland if my passport is not valid?

Now that the UK has left EU a Pet Passport issued in Great Britain is not valid to allow your pet to move freely into EU countries. When travelling to the EU or Northern Ireland you will need an Animal Health Certificate (AHC).

How do I get an Animal Health Certificate?

AHCs may only be issued by specially qualified vets (OVs) - so if there is no-one at your local practice who can sign the documents, they should provide you with the details of a local OV. When you go to get an AHC, you must take your pet, along with its microchip details, vaccination record and the test results showing good response to rabies vaccination. Your vet may already have these details, but it is better to take them with you. The AHC must be signed and the vet will enter the day the blood sample to check for rabies protection was taken.

You will need to take your pet to the vet no more than 10 days before you travel, and the vet will need to see proof of microchipping date and vaccination against rabies. The AHC will be valid for 10 days after issue for entry into the EU or Northern Ireland and then for 4 months for travel within the EU or return to Great Britain. Your pet will need a new certificate for each trip you make to the EU or Northern Ireland from Great Britain.

There are details on how to get an AHC

at: <https://www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad/getting-an-animal-health-certificate->

How do I complete the course of rabies vaccination?

To get an AHC for travel your pet must be microchipped and then, if it is over 12 weeks of age it can be vaccinated against rabies. At least 30 days after rabies vaccination a blood sample must be sent to an EU approved laboratory to confirm that your pet has produced a good immune response to the vaccine. Your vet will give you a copy of the test results.

You need to wait a further 3 months after the blood sample was taken before you can travel.

If your pet's response to the first vaccine is not adequate your vet will have to give another vaccination and then you need to wait another 30 days before a second blood sample can be taken.

Once you have a vaccination certificate showing your pet has a good immune response to rabies vaccination and you keep your pet's rabies vaccination up to date, you do not have to have a repeat blood test if you travel to the EU again.

What do I do when I arrive in the EU?

If you are travelling with a pet you must enter the EU through a designated traveller's point of entry (TPE). There is a list of the valid points of entry for each country at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pet-travel-approved-air-sea-rail-and-charter-routes-for-the-movement-of-pets>

At the TPE you will need to show evidence of:

- Your pet's microchip
- Rabies vaccine
- Successful blood test results
- Tapeworm treatment (if required)

Returning to the UK

Dogs travelling on Pet Passports must be treated against tapeworms before entering the UK from most countries. The treatment will be recorded in the passport. Although treatment for ticks is not required under the scheme, UK vets strongly advise that treatment to prevent ticks is carried out when your pet travels and before return to the UK.

Dogs, cats and ferrets will be able to enter the UK from qualifying countries provided they meet the relevant requirements. For a list of qualifying countries, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/bring-pet-to-uk/listed-and-unlisted-countries>.

At present there is free movement of pets within the British Isles, including between the UK, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. However, owners with travel documents for their

pets are advised to take these with them when travelling with their animal.

Can I take my pet to countries outside of the EU?

If you are travelling to a non-EU country you will need an Export Health Certificate (EHC) for your pet and complete and export application form (EXA). There is information on this at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-an-export-health-certificate>.

How do I get a Third Country Certificate to bring an animal to the UK from a third country?

A third country certificate can be used for the non-commercial movement of up to 5 pets from all third countries into the UK. This can be issued by official veterinarians in all third countries.

It is really important that you talk to your vet before travel about any specific health risks to your pet while you are away. Ask for advice on how to protect your pet against other diseases that are more common in other parts of the world.

Make sure you plan well in advance for your trip as it could take a minimum of 4 months to complete all the necessary documentation. Remember your pet's AHC will be valid for only 10 days after the date issue for entry into the EU (so you must make sure that the certificate is completed close to the time of your planned travel). If your travel is delayed, then the certificate may have expired and your pet won't be able to travel. The certificate lasts for 4 months after the date of issue so your pet can travel within the EU or back into the UK within that time. If you return to the UK you would have to get a new certificate within 10 days of any future travel.

Keep up to date by checking the current regulation on the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-from-1-january-2021#if-great-britain-becomes-an-unlisted-country>

If you need further information contact the government helpline 0370 241 1710 Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm or email pettravel@apha.gov.uk

