

The Pet Travel Scheme (PETS)

European Union countries - dogs and cats

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 under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) to enter or re-enter the UK from other EU countries with an EU pet passport. EU countries are listed in part 3.

For details of other fact sheets in this series and contact points see part 6.

As of 26th May 2010, a limit of five animals (dogs, cats and ferrets only) is applicable per person for all importations into and around the European Union, regardless of the exporting country. This limit was introduced by the European Parliament and Council and is applicable to **all** listed countries

PART 1: THE RULES

To **enter or re-enter the UK** from 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. See part 2 for detailed procedures. In certain countries the order of preparation may be different (*see Annex A*).

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*).

For advice on taking your pet **from the UK to other EU countries** see *part 5b*.

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

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

Your pet may not enter or re-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 Annex B 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 Annex A to 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 (*but also see Annex A*).

- ***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 *(only necessary if your pet is entering or re-entering the UK, Malta or, from a country other than the UK, the Republic of Ireland)*

After being vaccinated, your pet must have a blood test to make sure that the vaccine has worked. This can be carried out after your pet has travelled to another EU country unless a blood test is required for entry to that country.

Your vet will tell you the best time for the blood test to be done 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. If a blood test is not necessary, or is to be carried out in another EU country, you can get a passport after your pet has been microchipped and vaccinated against rabies.

- ***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). These 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 appropriate.

- ***Using the passport***

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

A passport may not be used enter or re-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 then 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*). For travelling from the UK to other EU countries, see part 5(b).

- ***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.

- Bengal cats – for more details see part 5c.

Keep your documents safe because the transport company checking your pet will need to see them. 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.

<p>You are responsible for ensuring that you have the correct documents for your pet to enter the UK. Make sure that they are 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.</p>

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 **not less than 24 hours and not more than 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 not less than 24 hours and not more than 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.

Please note some treatments may not be applicable to both cats and dogs (or ferrets) and this should be checked with your vet. A collar impregnated with acaricide is not an acceptable form of treatment against ticks.

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

Listed countries are subject to change. For the latest situation see the PETS website or ring the Helpline.

(a) EU countries and territories

UK-resident pets can travel to any of the EU countries shown below and return to the UK under the Scheme. Pets that come from any of these countries can also 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	Estonia	Hungary	Netherlands
Azores	Faroe Islands	Ireland ³	Poland
Balearic Islands	Finland	Italy	Portugal
Belgium	France	Latvia	Réunion
Bulgaria	French Guiana	Lithuania	Romania
Canary Islands	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovakia
Ceuta	Gibraltar	Madeira	Slovenia
Cyprus ¹	Greece	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Greenland	Martinique	Sweden
Denmark	Guadeloupe ²	Melilla	United Kingdom

¹ Dogs and cats 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. However, as at October 2005, PETS compliant animals travelling from north Cyprus (the area north of the Buffer Zone) must be licensed into quarantine for 6 months on arrival in the UK. 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

Pets normally resident in the Channel Islands, Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland can enter the UK from listed countries if they meet the rules.

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 and territories

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

Andorra	Cayman Islands	Malaysia 3	St Lucia
Antigua & Barbuda	Chile	Mauritius	St Pierre & Miquelon
Argentina	Croatia	Mayotte	St Vincent & The Grenadines
Aruba	Falkland Islands	Mexico	San Marino
Ascension Island	Fiji	Monaco	Singapore
Australia	French Polynesia	Montserrat	Switzerland
Bahrain	Guam	Netherlands Antilles	Taiwan
Barbados	Hawaii	New Caledonia	Trinidad & Tobago
Belarus	Hong Kong	New Zealand	United Arab Emirates 4
Bermuda	Iceland	Norway	USA (mainland)
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Jamaica ¹	Russian Federation 2	Vanuatu
British Virgin Islands	Japan	St Helena	Vatican
Canada	Liechtenstein	St Kitts & Nevis	Wallis & Futuna

¹ Jamaican law as at October 2005 prevents their involvement in PETS. See the website or

contact the Helpline to check for any change in this situation.

(2) The Russian Federation consists of [88 subjects \(regions\)](#). Please note that the following Republics are **NOT** part of the Russian Federation; Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

(3) The import into UK quarantine of dogs and cats from Malaysia (Peninsula) is prohibited unless health certification provided by the Malaysian veterinary authorities is provided which confirms that the cat or dog:

- has had no contact with pigs during at least the 60 days prior to export; and
- has not been resident on holdings where during the past 60 days any case of Nipah disease has been confirmed; and
- has been subjected with a negative result to an IgC capture ELISA test carried out in a laboratory approved for testing for antibody against the Nipah disease viruses by the competent veterinary authorities on a sample of blood taken within 10 days of export.

In order to enquire about arrangements for the test to be carried out and obtaining the health certification, you will need to contact the Malaysian veterinary authorities on 006 03 88702000. The original health certification must accompany the dog/cat to the UK and be handed to the authorised carrying agent nominated to collect the dog/cat from the port/airport of landing in the UK.

(4) The UAE consists of the following states Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, and Al Fujairah.

(c) How to travel

You must use one of the routes and transport companies on the enclosed EU route list 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, unless your pet does not leave the confines of the airport during the interchange, 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. There is a separate route list for assistance dogs.

Routes may change and new ones may be added. For the latest information, see the PETS website 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 which could include a health declaration. 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), Scottish Government (for Scotland) 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.

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).

Your pet may be subject to a further official check by Defra or the Scottish Government after it has been checked by the transport company. This is for quality assurance purposes.

PART 5: PETS IN THE UK AND ABROAD

(a) Pets travelling within the British Isles

Pets resident in the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man or Republic of Ireland, or which have entered the British Isles under PETS, can travel freely between these countries without the need for any papers. However, if you have PETS documents you are advised to take them with you. Pets can be carried on any route within the British Isles subject to the transport company's agreement and conditions of carriage.

(b) Taking your pet from the UK into other EU countries

To travel from the UK to another EU country, a pet must be microchipped (although some countries accept a tattoo), vaccinated against rabies (although Sweden does not require this when a pet travels direct from the UK) and issued with an EU pet passport. Malta has additional entry requirements and to enter Sweden your pet must be treated for tapeworms with a product containing praziquantel no more than 10 days before entry. Please contact the authorities (e.g. the Embassy) of the country you wish to enter to check the requirements. See also **(d)** below. For rules to re-enter the UK see parts 1, 2 and 3.

21 day wait

For EU countries where more stringent entry requirements do not apply, the EU has introduced a wait of 21 days from the date of the first rabies vaccination before a pet can enter those EU countries. However, if the vaccine manufacturer's datasheet requires more than one vaccination to complete the primary vaccination protocol, the 21 day wait applies from the date of the final vaccination of that protocol. Your vet will advise you further.

Booster vaccinations are valid for entry from the date given **provided** they are given on time.

Residence

If your pet stays in another country it may become subject to that country's rules on residence e.g. pets in France become resident after 3 months. You are advised to check with the authorities of the country what those rules are and what implications becoming resident will have for your pet. For example, some countries require resident pets to have an annual rabies vaccination.

(c) Dangerous dogs and hybrid animals

It is illegal to possess certain types of dogs in the UK. For a list of banned breeds and other information visit the Defra website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/dangerous/index.htm> or telephone Defra on 020 7904 6910. Contact points for Scottish Government 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.

For rules on keeping dangerous wild animals, including wolf-dog hybrids and domestic cat / wild cat hybrids, see: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/pets/dangerousdogs.htm#act76>.

This page includes information on hybrid cats which may enter the UK under the rules of the Pet Travel Scheme.

(d) 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.

(e) Health and welfare of your pet

When abroad your pet may come into contact with animal diseases which we do not have in the UK, e.g. diseases transmitted by ticks, and parasites like heartworm. These could kill your pet or make it seriously ill. Some can affect humans.

Before you take your pet abroad, consult your vet about any preventative treatment necessary and how to look for signs of ill health in your pet.

If your pet becomes ill after returning to the UK, explain where it has been so your vet can consider diseases not normally found in the UK. A scheme called DACTARI has been set up to record these diseases. Please remind your vet about it (*see separate enclosure*).

Also consider the welfare needs of your pet when travelling abroad, and whether it will benefit from travelling with you. A leaflet on your pet's welfare when travelling is available from the PETS website, Helpline, Scottish Government, NAWDEPC and DARD.

PART 6: MORE INFORMATION

Other fact sheets

- *Fact sheet 1* gives a general introduction to the European Regulation on the movement of pet animals.
- *Fact sheet 2* is no longer valid.
- *Fact sheet 4* explains the rules for dogs and cats entering the UK from non-EU listed countries with an EU pet passport or an official veterinary certificate.
- *Fact sheet 5* explains the rules for the movement of ferrets into the UK.

- *Fact sheet 6* explains the rules for the movement of pet rabbits and rodents into the UK.

Contacts

Animal Health

PETS

- Website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/index.htm>
 - Helpline: 0870 241 1710 (Monday to Friday - 08.30 to 17.00 UK time)
- E-mail: quarantine@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk (enclose your postal address and daytime telephone number)
- Fax: 01245 351162

Quarantine

- Website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/quarantine/index.htm>
- Telephone: 01245 454860
- E-mail: quarantine@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk
- Fax: 01245 351162

Scottish Government

- Telephone: 0300 244 9243
- E-mail: animal.health@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
- Fax: 0300 244 9797

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:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/vetsurveillance/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, and to make sure you have the latest information.

Annex A

TATTOOED DOGS AND CATS

To enter the UK under PETS, dogs and cats must be fitted with a microchip, then vaccinated against rabies, and then blood tested.

But for dogs and cats in **France**, dogs in **Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway** and for *pedigree* dogs in **Poland**, there is a different system of preparation i.e. tattoo, vaccination, blood test and finally microchip. Pets' details must be recorded on national registers.

The UK allows dogs from France, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and *pedigree* dogs from Poland (and cats from France) that have been prepared in accordance with national rules, to enter the UK under PETS. The vet must have issued EU pet passport confirming that he/she has seen the national registration document showing the tattoo number. French law no longer requires animals to be tattooed if they have been microchipped. They can also now be microchipped before being vaccinated and blood tested.

This derogation only applies for those pets in countries where a national mandatory identification and registration system applies.

Dogs and cats that are identified solely by tattoo do not meet the rules of the Pet Travel Scheme.

Annex B

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

If my pet is entering quarantine, I have obtained an import licence from Defra, Scottish Government or DARD before travelling (*part 3d*).

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