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## 4 in a line travel pack

People care a lot about their pets. Some refer to them as family members, designate rooms in their homes for them, shower them with gifts on their birthdays and arrange funerals for them when they pass along this great animal paradise in the sky. If you're not convinced of the widespread love of pets, look at the numbers: In 2008, Americans spent \$43.4 billion on pet products [source: American Pet Products Manufacturers Association]. One of the newest pet niches that has grown in recent years is pet travel. Hotels, resorts and spas designed specifically for pets have emerged. For owners who wish to bring their beloved pets along for the trip, countless pet travel accessories match the need of any travel feline or Fido. But taking your pet on holiday with you requires preparation. Just as you need to plan ahead and pack the appropriate clothes and necessities for the weather, location and duration of your trip, you must do the same for your pet. In the pre-travel rush, basic things like your extra toothbrush or socks can slip your mind easily. Writing a list of things to bring can solve this problem. Since your dog or cat can't hold a pen or pack a bag, it's up to you to remember all the essentials of pet travel. To get you started, here are 10 of the most common pet travel items to consider carrying. Content A pet passport looks adorable, doesn't it? A small cup photo of your cute dog or cat and tiny paw print in place of a signature would warm the heart of any customs officer. Well, that's not exactly what we mean by pet passport. It is essentially your veterinarian's certification that your pet is healthy and that its vaccinations are up to date. You can buy passport-like logs to carry documents to facilitate handling. Also slip a photo of your pet into this passport in case you lose your pet. Pet passports are not required for interstate travel, but if you leave the country, it is a good idea to have one. In fact, a passport may be required by law, as in the European Union. Why do governments care about pet? Let's say you cross the pond and holiday in England with your Pomeranian for a few weeks. British authorities wouldn't be too happy if this cute pomerania had an ugly case of rabies or disease that spread to other dogs and triggered an epidemic. Different countries have different regulations regarding vaccinations and quarantines. To investigate the rules for importing pets from your international destination, you can consult the U.S. Embassy in that country. Advertising OK, it's not something you need to pack, but a microchip is a good idea to implant in your hairy friend before traveling. One of the main reasons you can avoid travelling with your pet is the fear of losing it. But that's where you can rest a little easier. Microchips, which are becoming more common can help you find a lost animal. The data inside the chips contain an identification number, which usually consists of nine digits if sold in the United States and 15 digits in the European Union. These chips operate from radio frequency identification (RFID) technology, and the varying amount of numbers in the identification numbers indicates different radio frequencies. When you register your microchip with an agency like the American Kennel Club, this number matches your contact information. When a pet gets lost and ends up in an animal shelter, it can scan the microchip for identifying information. The shelter staff can then contact you and return your pet. Advertising Pet fleas are barely larger than a grain of rice, and most veterinarians regularly implant them in animals by hypodermic needle. Some animal shelters also offer microchip services. Implants usually cost less than \$50. When traveling by car, dogs in particular may not be the nicest to your seats. What about cats? For safe car travel, kittens must be housed in carriers. Of course, you want your puppy where all the action is, but you also don't want to spend hours cleaning the hair and dander of the upholstery. How about placing old towels or blankets on the seat? They may be enough for short getaways, but no more than a good job to stay in place when a pet moves around them for a long time. For extended trips in the car, the purchase of a seat cover may be required. Seat covers are easy to understand - they do exactly what you think they do. The fabric envelops the seat to protect the upholstery or leather. You can find seat covers of different sizes to hold captain's chairs at the front of the vehicle or longer passenger seats at the rear. Does it look dull? That is not the case. Manufacturers make pet seat covers in a rainbow of colors and textures to keep you and your pet at peace on the road. Some are even in eco-friendly, water-resistant or scratch-resistant fabrics. The main decision when buying a seat cover is how much you want to spend. Seat covers fit any budget, from less than \$50 to more than hundreds of dollars. Advertising Nothing makes for a more unpleasant trip than having to go to the bathroom while driving on a stretch motorway. Imagine how your pets must feel, locked in a carrier. If you are travelling with a dog, it is up to you to monitor its behaviour and to withdraw regularly for pit stops. But with cats, things are a little more complicated. Few people allowed their cats to jump out of the car and relieve themselves on the side of the road lest they run away. Advertising So what if you drive across the country with a cat? Train him to walk on a leash? Unless you have a lot of time and patience at your disposal before your trip, you bring the bathroom with A portable litter box folds up to make storage easier, and you jes the contents after your cat uses it. This tray can also be useful if you are staying at someone's house or in a hotel with a cat. Before traveling with your cats, remember that they are extremely territorial, usual creatures. In addition to acclimatizing them to the movement of getting into a car, you should familiarize them with the new litter box in the weeks leading up to your trip. This way it will look and smell familiar, and your cat will be more willing to use it. Otherwise, you might end up with a stinking mess on the back or upstairs of the hotel. When you are trapped in a car for a while, you probably tend to get a little restless. So are your pets. Once they get used to the movement of the car, some dogs and cats will take a first step and take a nap. But unless you give them sedatives, this probably won't be the case for the duration of an hour-long trip. Maybe they have an excessive energy to be confined to a small space or just crave some attention to the old. One way to kill two birds with a stone is to bring some toys or play sets. Pet entertainment doesn't need to be anything extravagant. A favorite chewing toy or home pillow makes a great distraction. The items smell familiar and, therefore, keep your pets calmer. This can go for cats as well. If they have a favorite stuffed animal they hunt around the house or blanket they like to snuggle up, put it inside their aircraft carrier. Portable game sets can also rid hyper dogs of excess energy. These mini obstacle courses encourage jumping and running. Of course, a stick or ball to look for will also tucker on a dog. Advertising Illness or Injury is the last thing you want to happen to one of your companions on a trip. But as everyone knows, things go wrong sometimes, and it's better to be prepared. If you are travelling in a car, you may already have a first aid kit suitable for human injuries. When travelling with pets, you should also have a loan for your pet's special needs. You can buy prefabricated pet first aid kits in stores, or you can pack one of your own from items you probably have at home. If you want to follow the approach of doing it yourself, the American Red Cross recommends the following basic supplies any pet first aid kit: gauze pads, gauze rollers and bandages, cotton swabs, instant cold bag, fabric roll, tweezers, thermometer, hydrogen peroxide and antibiotic ointment [source: American Red Cross]. Advertising You can also include other items, such as plastic gloves, scissors, soft pet sedatives, eye drops (for food) and bottled water. If the animal becomes seriously ill or injured, exercise caution if you are trying to treat it on your own. For serious injuries, you may want to locate the nearest veterinarian. If you've read how many times do I have to give water to my pet on a car trip?, you'll access to fresh water is essential to maintaining your pet's health during the trip. To prevent dehydration, cats and dogs should always have fresh water available. How much water do they need? As much as they normally consume during the day at home. Now you may be wondering how you can meet this need without water splashing around the inside of the car. If you hit a bumpy stretch of road, will it send the water bowl flying? You won't have to worry about it if you use a pet travel water dispenser. These accessories are specially designed to stop spills and stay in place. Some, for example, distribute only a small amount of water in the drinking dish at a time. The foldable travel bowls are made of thick fabrics and have square bases to prevent them from tipping over. If you are interested in a cloth travel bowl, be sure to check the label first to make sure it is suitable for food as well as water. These accessories don't cost much more than the water you'll pour into them - you can track down a pet travel bowl easily for less than \$10. Advertising Each state has regulations on car seat belts. About half of the states will be ticket drivers only on the basis of not wearing a seat belt, while the other half can fine drivers for it only when they are arrested for another traffic violation. No matter what state you're sailing in, it's always smart to go wrong in terms of safety and wear a seat belt - passengers included. If these passengers are of feline or canine variety, treat them with the same care. As mentioned earlier, when traveling in cars with cats, they should stay inside a comfortable transport crate as they are smaller and sometimes more difficult to control. Even if your cat gets into a carrier, it's wise to lock the crate or fix it in a certain way as well. Advertising Naturally, you can't curl up in a dog in the back seat the same way you would a human. Most commercial pet seat belts consist of a harness that fits around the dog's torso and a belt accessory that snaps into your car's seat belt insert. These usually allow dogs to sit or get up, but not walk around. Other types of pet seat belts offer more mobility. They are similar to short leashes that attach to safety of the car. Dogs can walk on these, and owners can adjust them to desirable lengths to prevent them from jumping into the driver's lap. Smaller dog breeds can also fit comfortably into pet car seats that also hang in seat belt inserts. This is one of the most fundamental basics of pet ownership: Make sure your dog or cat always wears a collar with a tag on it every time you venture from home. Pet collars and tags are probably essential travel accessories that every travelling animal should wear. Most dogs and cats already carry some kind of collar and tag with their name on it. But on the other with the pet's name and the owner's local contact information, animals also need rabies tags and travel tags with your out-of-town contact information [source: American Association of Veterinary Medicine]. Advertising Consider detailed identification tags as a form of pet travel insurance. The pet fleas discussed earlier will help you if you are separated from your pet; however, lost animals do not always end up in shelters. If a person finds the pet but does not turn it into a shelter, they have no way to scan the chip. That's when travel coordinates could save the day. Since these important tags are attached to a collar, make sure your pet's collar is attached to its neck. An old ratty could fall. Like identification tags, porters are an obvious necessity to travel with a pet. Still, you need to evaluate the kennel you have and determine if it is suitable for an extended trip - especially if your itinerary includes the flight. First, check the carrier's doors. How safe are they? When you reprimand your dog or cat for a quick outing, does the animal chew or scratch the door? Has he ever managed to escape? If so, it may be time to invest in a new carrier. Grated metal doors will be the safest and most waterproof. Determined pets could eventually work their teeth with plastic teeth. Carriers should also have a lot of ventilation. Windows or air openings should not be large enough for a pet to shimmy its output, however. Planning to fly with your pet? The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) warns against companies that tout their kennels as airline-approved. Although most airlines do not allow wheeled carriers on board, there are no pre-approved carriers [source: USDA]. Just opt for the strongest and most comfortable for your pet. Pet travel rules differ from airline to airline, and you can contact them individually for their specifications. We live in a sharing economy. And a pet-loving economy. What happens when the two collide? Learn more about pets and car sharing at HowStuffWorks. USDA: Pet TravelHumane Society: Caring for Your Pets When Traveling American Association of Medicine. Pet travel tips. Updated on December 2, 2008. (January 8, 2009) Caring for Your Pets When You Travel. The Humane Society of the United States. (January 8, 2009) Tip: First Aid Kits and Emergency Treatments -- Prepare Now!. Paw rescue. (January 8, 2009) Humane Pets. American Red Cross. (January 8, 2009) Industry Statistics and Trends. American Pet Products Association. (January 8, January, Travel. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Updated on October 1, 2008. (January 8, 2009) 2009)

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