

Japan → United Kingdom

Dog Import Checklist & Quick Guide | TailHarbor | Updated April 2026

KEY INFORMATION

UK PET TRAVEL SCHEME: GB Animal Health Certificate required | ALL pets enter as MANIFEST CARGO

Preparation Time:	4-8 weeks
Microchip:	ISO 11784/11785 (must be implanted BEFORE rabies vaccination)
Rabies Vaccination:	Required. Minimum 21 days before travel (primary). Keep boosters current.
Titer Test:	Not required (EU-listed/equivalent origin)
Documentation:	GB Animal Health Certificate (Export Health Certificate) issued by Official Veterinarian. Valid 10 days. EU Pet Passport NOT accepted.
Tapeworm Treatment:	MANDATORY for UK. Praziquantel, 1-5 days before arrival (not less than 24h, not more than 120h). Most common reason for refusal.
Transport:	ALL pets must enter as MANIFEST CARGO (no cabin flights permitted)
Approved Routes:	MANDATORY. Eurotunnel Le Shuttle, approved airlines, or approved ferry services ONLY. No private boats/planes.
Non-Compliance:	Up to 4 months quarantine at owner's expense (GBP 1,500-3,000+). Dogs may be seized or returned.
Cropped Ears/Docked Tails:	Import ban (Act 2025). Dogs with cropped ears or docked tails cannot be imported.
Breed Restrictions:	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991: Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro banned. XL Bully added 2024.
Local Currency:	GBP

USEFUL TIPS

- Start the process as early as possible. Delays with lab results or vet appointments can push back your timeline significantly.
- ALL pets must enter the UK as manifest cargo. No cabin travel is permitted. Budget \$2,000-5,000+ for cargo transport. Check GOV.UK for approved carriers.
- The tapeworm treatment window is strict: not less than 24 hours and not more than 120 hours (1-5 days) before arrival. This is the most commonly failed requirement.
- The GB Animal Health Certificate is valid for only 10 days from issuance. Plan your vet appointment accordingly.
- The XL Bully ban (Feb 2024) and Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 are strictly enforced. Pit Bull Terriers, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, and XL Bullies are banned. Dogs with cropped ears or docked tails cannot be imported (Act 2025).

PRE-TRAVEL CHECKLIST

EARLY PREPARATION

- Confirm your dog's breed is permitted in United Kingdom
- Book manifest cargo transport (ALL pets must enter UK as cargo, no cabin)
- Purchase IATA-approved travel crate (correct size for your dog)
- Begin crate training

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Microchip implanted (ISO 11784/11785) -- BEFORE vaccination
- Rabies vaccination administered (min. 21 days before travel)
- Tapeworm treatment (praziquantel) scheduled 1-5 days before arrival in UK

DOCUMENTATION

- GB Animal Health Certificate obtained from Official Veterinarian (valid 10 days)
- All vaccination records compiled
- Tapeworm treatment certificate with vet stamp, date, and time
- Copies of all documents made (2 sets)
- Manifest cargo booking confirmed (approved carrier)

TRAVEL DAY

- All original documents in carry-on bag
- Confirm tapeworm treatment is within the 1-5 day window on arrival day
- Traveling via approved route only (manifest cargo, no private boats or aircraft)
- Crate labeled with your name, phone, destination, and 'Live Animal'
- Water dish filled and attached inside crate
- Arrive at airport early (3+ hours for international with pet)

AFTER ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

- Present documents at Border Control Post (BCP) -- microchip will be scanned
- Register microchip with UK database (Petlog or Animal Tracker)
- Register with local veterinarian
- Check local Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) for lead/muzzle rules
- Ensure dog is not a banned breed under Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 / XL Bully ban