

United States → 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:	4-6 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.
USDA Endorsement:	USDA APHIS endorsement required on health certificate before departure
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.
- USDA APHIS endorsement is required on your health certificate before departure from the US.

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)
- USDA APHIS endorsement obtained on health certificate
- 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

