



Bella's move: United States to Japan

Made for you on 28 Oct 2026 · Rules checked 28 Oct 2026

DIFFICULTY	TRAVEL DATE	START BY	PET
Very hard	12 Jun 2027	12 Nov 2026	Bella · Dog

ON TRACK

12 Jun 2027 works if you start on time. Your first deadline is 12 Nov 2026.

Two rabies shots, a blood test at a designated lab and a 180-day wait after the blood draw. Notify Japan's Animal Quarantine Service at least 40 days ahead. Plan about 7 months.

QUARANTINE

Up to 180 days (or sent back) if rules are missed

BLOOD TEST

Required: ≥ 0.5 IU/ml, then 180-day wait

PERMIT

Advance notification ≥ 40 days before arrival

Your dated timeline

Tick each step when it's done. Dates are worked out from your travel date — keep them in your calendar with the reminder file that came with this plan.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ By 12 Nov 2026
latest date | ISO microchip + rabies vaccine #1
Microchip first, then rabies shot #1 (pet at least 91 days old; inactivated or recombinant vaccine). |
| ☐ By 12 Dec 2026
latest date | Rabies vaccine #2
At least 30 days after #1, while #1 is still valid. |
| ☐ By 14 Dec 2026
latest date | Rabies antibody blood test
At a designated lab after vaccine #2; result ≥ 0.5 IU/ml. The pet may land no earlier than 180 days after this blood draw. |
| ☐ By 3 May 2027
latest date | Advance notification to Animal Quarantine Service
At least 40 days before arrival — late notices are not accepted in principle. |

- ☐ **2 Jun – 12 Jun 2027**
window
- Vet exam + government-endorsed certificate**
Clinical exam within 10 days of boarding (no signs of rabies; dogs also no signs of leptospirosis); the certificate must be endorsed by USDA APHIS. Bring the original (no pencil or correction fluid).

Documents for travel day

Based on the steps of your route. Keep originals with you, never in checked bags.

- ☐ Microchip record – the same 15-digit number on every document
- ☐ Rabies vaccination certificate(s), signed by your vet
- ☐ Rabies antibody (blood test) lab report
- ☐ Advance notification approval from the destination
- ☐ Original health / export certificate with the official endorsement
- ☐ Airline booking confirmation for your pet
- ☐ A recent photo of your pet

Airline check

- ☐ Confirm the airline takes your pet on this exact route – cabin, hold or cargo – before you buy your own ticket.
- ☐ Book your pet's place right away: airlines only take a few pets per flight.
- ☐ Measure your carrier against the airline's limits. Several European airlines cap a cabin pet at 8 kg including the carrier; many US airlines go by carrier size.
- ☐ Ask about seasonal heat or cold embargoes if your pet flies in the hold.

Short-nosed breed: airline rules

- Alaska Airlines, Hawaiian Airlines and Horizon Air: from 1 October 2026 certain short-nosed dog and cat breeds are no longer accepted in the cargo hold.
- Lufthansa: short-nosed dogs and cats may not fly in the cargo hold (since 2020); in the cabin only within its limits (up to 8 kg including the carrier).
- KLM: short-nosed pets generally cannot travel in the hold; cabin or cargo instead.
- Delta: short-nosed dogs and cats and their mixes are not accepted as cargo.
- American Airlines: short-nosed dogs and cats are not accepted as checked pets or cargo.

If your pet is too big for the cabin, a specialist pet shipper is usually the only way – book early.

Travel day

- ☐ All original documents in your hand luggage, plus copies on paper and on your phone.
- ☐ Carrier labelled with your name, phone number and your pet's name.
- ☐ Your pet can stand, turn around and lie down in the carrier.
- ☐ Water bowl attached to the door, absorbent pad on the floor.
- ☐ No sedatives unless your vet prescribes them — most airlines advise against sedation.
- ☐ Arrive early: pet check-in often closes before regular check-in.
- ☐ A short walk and a light meal a few hours before the flight.

Watch out on this route

- Counting the 180 days from the vaccine — Japan's clock starts at the blood draw.
- Notifying Japan's Animal Quarantine Service less than 40 days before arrival — late notices are not accepted in principle.
- A microchip starting with 900 202 — Japan doesn't accept it for now.
- The 180-day clock only starts at the blood draw.
- Missing anything: quarantine for up to 180 days or the pet is sent back.
- Dogs may only arrive at 19 designated ports — including Narita, Haneda, Kansai, Chubu, New Chitose, Fukuoka and Naha airports. Cats arriving elsewhere: contact the Animal Quarantine Service first.
- Japan does not accept microchips starting with 900 202 for now — check the number before the first vaccine.

Questions for your vet

- ☐ Is the microchip an ISO 15-digit chip that scanners at my destination can read?
- ☐ Will the rabies vaccine still be valid on my travel date, and does my route need a waiting period after it?
- ☐ Are you a USDA-accredited vet who can sign international health certificates?
- ☐ Can we book the final exam inside the window my route allows?
- ☐ Is my pet healthy enough to fly — age, breathing, heart?

Notes

Official sources

- <https://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/import-other.html>
- [https://public.alaskacargo.com/notices/2026/brachycephalic-\(short-nosed\)-breed-restrictions](https://public.alaskacargo.com/notices/2026/brachycephalic-(short-nosed)-breed-restrictions)
- <https://www.lufthansa.com/us/en/tiere-als-uebergepaeck>
- <https://www.klm.com/information/pets/reservation>
- <https://www.deltacargo.com/Cargo/catalog/restricted-animals>
- <https://www.aa.com/web/i18n/travel-info/special-assistance/pets.html>

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