



**In Loving Memory
of Carter
died 01-11-08**

The Carter Plan Transporting Rescued Dogs by Car

Carter was a handsome black tri Mini Aussie puppy. He was found in a parking lot and given a temporary home by kind rescuers. He went unclaimed and passed through several hands before he became entered MARS. Carter was loved by everyone who met him because of his sweet disposition and eagerness to please. Carter traveled a lot of miles in his short life. He was adopted by a family out of state and was transported to meet his new guardians. Within two hours of his adoption, Carter was dead.

Carter's death was preventable. He was lost during a stop on the way to his new home. Sadly, his adopters failed to take some necessary steps to protect him and ensure his safety in travel. We can all learn from Carter's death and perhaps prevent the same fate from happening to another dog.

Adopters are always excited when they are meeting their new dog. They have been preparing and planning for a new addition to their family. They have bonded emotionally with the dog and they may forget that the dog does not yet know them. In their excitement, they often neglect the basics of safely transporting a dog.

The following guidelines are designed to increase the safety of dogs in transport. They should be followed as closely as possible to prevent the loss of a dog in transit. They are dedicated to the memory of Carter.

The dog should be fitted with a flat buckle collar that is tight against the neck. Adopters should be aware that it is possible for a dog to back out of a collar. Therefore, the collar should be tightly fitting to prevent escape. A snap bolt four- or six-foot lead should be attached to the collar. In addition to a collar and lead, a slip lead can be used as a backup safety measure. In the event that a lead is dropped, the adopter may still have control of the backup lead.

Adopters should work under the assumption that the dog will not behave well in the car. Therefore, they should be prepared to transport the dog in a plastic crate. Use of a crate serves several purposes, and they are listed below.

1. It prevents the dog from moving about the vehicle and distracting the driver.
2. It protects the driver or passengers from being hit by the dog if there is an accident.
3. It prevents the dog from escaping through a door or window.

The crate can be equipped with a metal grate on the floor so that the dog will not have to lie in its waste if it has an accident. It is advisable to drive straight to the home destination to minimize the likelihood of losing a dog during a rest stop. The adopter may choose to keep one of the leads on the dog while in the crate so that the lead can be grabbed when the destination has been reached. It should be noted that some dogs will use the lead as a chew toy during the journey.

Upon exiting the car, the adopter should block the door of the crate with his or her body. The collar or lead that is on the dog should be grasped and the backup lead attached to the dog prior to removing the dog from the car.

In some cases, where the journey exceeds four or five hours, it may be necessary to stop. To minimize the necessity of stops, do not feed the dog on the day of the journey. Rest stops may not be the best place to let a dog take a break. Dangers abound because of the high level of activity from cars and trucks moving through the rest area. In no event should a dog be taken out on a freeway exit ramp or by the side of the road. Do not let children take the responsibility of exercising the dog on the way home. Also, do not let strangers approach the dog during breaks. The dog does not yet know to whom it belongs and it may be stressed if it encounters too many people.

Upon reaching the final destination, do not relax until you are in the house. Once safe inside, then you can remove the leads. Your dog is safe and secure in its new home and you can begin bonding with your wonderful new friend.

Some of these precautions may seem to be extreme. It is our desire that you arrive home safely with your new canine companion. It's better to be safe than sorry, or dead, like Carter.