



This article is to address the numerous questions regarding traveling with CO2 & HPA tanks. This article is written with years of experience I have gained, traveling to events with compressed air cylinders, playing the event, and traveling safely back home. If you follow the instructions in this guide, you should have no problems or issues traveling with your paintball air tanks.

Q) What is the policy on traveling with paintball tanks on an airplane?

A) The regulator / valve must be removed from the bottle.

Q) How do I remove the regulator / valve from the tank?

A) In most cases, the regulator is loctited onto the bottle using RED loctite. Red Loctite is an extremely powerful thread sealant, and is nearly impossible to remove the regulator from your bottle without special tools. Paintball tank manufacturers have specially designed vices, strapwrenches and tools to remove the regulator without damaging it. Most likely if you attempt to remove the regulator yourself, you will damage your reg. The tools needed to properly remove the regulator cost more than the tank itself.

Q) What if I try to remove the regulator myself?

A) Most likely you will damage your regulator at worst, or at best, severely scratch or scar it.

Q) So what's the best method to remove the regulator?

A) You will need to send your tank back to the manufacturer who made your regulator. Crossfire should be shipped to Crossfire, Ninja to Ninja, Custom Products to Custom Products, Guerrilla Air to Guerrilla Air, PMI to Paintball Solutions, etc.

Q) How long does it take?

A) It can take a week or two to get your tank back, depending on the workload. Always call ahead to see if you need an RMA number

Q) Once the tank comes back with the regulator not attached, do I need to re-loctite it?

A) No, as long there is at least 600+ psi in the tank, it will be extremely difficult to unscrew the regulator from the tank in normal operation. Once the air pressure drops below 600psi, you will be able to unscrew the tank from the regulator by hand

Q) I'm really afraid to do this, my tank tends to get stuck in the ASA, what do I do?

A) You should purchase a bottle of Triflow from www.macrolineguy.com and lubricate the threads of your tank. ASA's without bleed tend to be most difficult to screw in and out (Tippmanns, Mini's, Proto SLG, etc). Just put two drops on the tank threads, one drop on the tank oring, you will be good to go

Q) Should I put a drop of Triflow on the regulator where it screws into the bottle?

A) Absolutely not, you should never put any oil, lubricant or fluid inside your tank. At 4500psi most oils are highly combustibile and your tank will explode.

Q) I accidentally put oil on the back of the regulator where it screws into the bottle, what should I do?

A) Ship it to the tank manufacturer ASA for inspection and cleaning, DO NOT AIR IT UP!! Even a single drop of oil inside of your tank can combust, and cause a life threatening explosion. Nothing should ever go inside your tank, you tank should always be bone dry, free of oils, lubricants and any other foreign objects

Q) Ok, I just got the tank back with the regulator seperated, now what do I do?

A) Nothing, just put air in it, a drop of triflow on the threads, and go play paintball

Q) Since there is no loctite, won't the regulator unscrew from the tank?

A) The air pressure inside the tank holds the regulator in place, it will not unscrew. Even at 1000psi, there is 200 pounds of force against the back of the regulator holding it in place. Just air it up, and go play paintball

Q) I'm still nervous about this, I'm afraid my regulator will unscrew from my tank

A) When you go play paintball, most people screw the tank into the gun, and play. At the end of the day, they unscrew the tank from the gun. The regulator is NOT going to unscrew from the tank on it's own. Let's pretend at the end of the day, your tank is empty, and your regulator does unscrew from the tank, once you hit about 2 or 3 turns, the air will bleed from from the tank around your regulator. You have nothing to worry about

Q) Am I allowed to bring the tank on the plane, in my carry on baggage?

A) As long as the regulator is removed, you can bring the tank and regulator on the plane. Your paintball gun has be checked it. Meaning, you cannot bring your paintball gun in your carry on baggage. You must go to the service counter, and check your marker in.

Q) Do I have to declare that there is a paintball gun in my check-in baggage?

A) Most of the time, you don't have to say anything for domestic flights. Internationally, however can be a different story. When in doubt, tell the baggage counter the contents of your bag.

Q) So tanks are allowed in my carry-on baggage, but paintball guns must be checked?

A) That is correct. However, I HIGHLY recommend you just put your tank, regulator and paintball gun in your checked baggage. Nothing is more embarrassing than holding up a 500

person line as they rummage through your carry-on baggage. Just put it all in your checked baggage.

Q) I'm sitting in my seat, the plane is about to depart. I realize I left my regulator on the tank, and my tank is filled to 4500psi. What do I do?

A) Unless you want to risk your tank blowing a burst disk and forcing the plane to emergency land, I would immediately make your way to the front of the plane, and tell the flight attendants that you have a filled compressed air cylinder in your bag, and you need to have your bag removed from the luggage compartment. Yes you will cause a scene, yes you will delay the plane, and yes you will most likely miss your flight.

Q) What's the worst thing that can happen if I cross my fingers, and keep my mouth shut?

A) The skin of an aircraft is very thin. If your tank blows a burst disk and sends 4500psi of air into a sealed luggage container, you risk everything from an emergency landing, structural failure of the aircraft, or even worse the airplane breaks apart and you are killed. Most car tires would blow apart at 100psi. We're talking 4,500 psi. Your car tires operate at 35psi, your bike tires operate at 40psi. Your paintball tank can hold 4,500psi. That's over one hundred times the operating pressure of your car tires. Now imagine this massive force unleashing inside a sealed luggage container.

Q) I once flew with my tank regulator attached to my bottle and I didn't get in trouble

A) Well thanks for putting everyone's life in danger (including your own). Maybe we as paintball players should start lobbying the NTSA and FAA to require a mandatory sentence of 30 days in prison and a \$10,000 fine to ANYONE caught flying with a sealed compressed air cylinder.

Q) How come you can ship tanks via AirMail with the regulators attached, but you can't bring them on a passenger airplane?

A) Cargo planes have understandably less stringent rules when it comes to shipping items. A passenger plane can hold 400 people, there are 3 to 5 people on a cargo plane, big difference in liability and risk. Also, cargo planes have shipping containers that are designed to handle such things as pressure releases in case something goes wrong, passenger planes do not.

Q) So I can ship my tank via AirMail without removing the regulator?

A) Yes, you can ship the tank with the regulator attached, AS LONG AS IT IS EMPTY!

Q) What if it's full?

A) Empty it

Q) What's the best way to empty a tank?

A) Pull the macroline off your ASA, screw in your tank and let the air blast out until it stops

Q) What's the best way to ship the tank to the hotel I'm staying at?

A) The best way is to drain the tank, put it in a box, and bring it to the post office. You will need to prepare TWO labels.

Label 1 = Shipping from your house to the hotel + stamp

Label 2 = shipping from the hotel to your house + stamp

You will need to put Label 2 + stamp in a safe place, and you will need to bring it with you on the plane. On Sunday evening, drain your tank, put it in the box, seal it up, and place Label 2 + Stamp on the box to ship the tank back to your house, from the hotel. Hand your box to the hotel staff, and ask them to give it to the postman on Monday.

Q) Don't I need to remove the regulator to ship the tank?

A) No, you just need to drain the air

Q) What if at the event, my tank company is present, and they remove the reg for me?

A) Well, you can now bring your tank and reg in your checked baggage and you don't have to ship it. You bought the second stamp for nothing. It's paintball, it's not cheap. Life moves on

Q) What about CO2 tanks?

A) CO2 tanks MUST be locktited because most do not have the safety features of the HPA tank regulator. When a CO2 tank valve unscrews from the bottle, the bottle becomes a powered rocket. This has killed and injured people in the past. You need to be EXTREMELY careful with CO2 tanks. Personally, I would NOT remove the valve on a CO2 tank. Drain it, and ship it.

Q) So the safest thing to do with CO2 tanks is to ship them?

A) Correct, do not remove the CO2 valve pin. Ship it or buy another one at the event. They are \$20 for a 20 ounce CO2 tank.

Be safe, use your head, don't take chances that put people's lives in danger. Hope this helps!

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