

How to choose the right cat carrier

#1

Cat carriers come in all shapes and sizes and it can be difficult to know what is the best type for your cat.

A cat carrier should be:

- **large enough** so that your cat can stand up and turn around, as well as sit or lie comfortably.
- **easy to clean.** Wicker, fabric and cardboard can be difficult to clean.
- **secure so the cat cannot escape.** Carriers that fasten shut with zips or cardboard fastenings are not secure.
- **lightweight.** Some carriers can become extremely heavy once your cat is inside.
- **used by only one cat.** If you own more than one cat, each cat should have its own carriers.
- **easy to enter and exit.** A door that opens at the front can allow your cat to voluntarily enter and exit the carrier (see 'How to train your cat to use a cat carrier') and a lid that opens can allow careful placing in and lifting out of cats not comfortable with voluntarily entering and exiting the carrier.





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The ideal cat carrier

What to look for in a cat carrier

Carrier made of sturdy plastic ensures easy cleaning and prevents escape

Roof entry provides an alternative entry and exit for cats not yet comfortable with voluntary entry/exit

Open-structured lockable door allows rewards, such as food, toys and stroking, to be offered through the secure door while ensuring the cat cannot escape



Slats on the side help partially conceal the cat while allowing air to circulate and the opportunity to feed treats

Ability to remove the top half of the carrier allows cats to be examined in the base of the carrier

Favourite toys placed in the carrier can help the cat to associate it as a positive place to be

Ample familiar bedding can help the cat feel more secure

A new cat carrier will appear unfamiliar to your cat which can make your cat wary of it. There are a few things you can do to help your cat feel that the carrier is a safe, familiar and positive place.

- **Place familiar bedding** that your cat regularly sleeps on in the cat carrier (do not wash the bedding first). Not only will this entice the cat to use the carrier as a resting place regularly, it will make the carrier smell of your cat which your cat will find reassuring.
- Position the cat carrier (with the door open or removed) in a **quiet and accessible part of your home** so your cat can visit it whenever it likes.
- **Leave toys and treats** in the carrier regularly. This will help your cat to view the carrier as a nice place to be.
- You can spray the **synthetic pheromone Feliway® on and in the carrier**. Feliway is a synthetic analogue of the naturally occurring cat pheromones secreted from the glands in the cheeks and face that provide messages of security and familiarity.