



CHIP YOUR CAT™

How Do I Get My Cat in the Carrier?

Many cats dislike their carriers because they associate them with something unpleasant - usually a trip to the veterinarian! Within a few weeks, you can teach your cat to associate the carrier with pleasant things (see below), but if you need to get your cat in his carrier now, here are a few tips:

- If you don't yet own a carrier, choose one with a door on the top, as well as the front.
- Before you get the carrier out, engage your cat in petting or play or offer him a tasty snack. Do not let the cat see the carrier until you are holding him in your arms.
- Have someone bring the carrier and place it on end, so the door is on top. (Some carriers have an opening on the top and if yours does, use this opening). Now hold your cat with both hands underneath his front legs so that his rear legs are dangling. Lower him into the carrier hind feet first.

You may also use a product that is the synthetic version of the pheromone that cats leave when they rub their faces on things. These pheromones have a calming effect on cats. Spray the pheromone product on the towel in the carrier (see below) about 30 minutes before you are going to put the cat in it. Look for a pheromone product at your local pet supply store.

If you have some time to plan ahead before you must put your cat in a carrier, it's a great idea to teach your cat that a carrier is a good thing. Here's how:

- Put the carrier in a place the cat generally likes and spends time in. Place a soft blanket or towel in the carrier.
- Put some tasty treats - small pieces of cooked chicken, canned tuna, or whatever your cat likes best - just inside the open door of the carrier. If your cat will not put his head in the carrier to eat the treats, place the treats on the floor just outside the carrier.
- Let the cat eat the treats and leave if he wants to. Do this several times a day. Gradually move the treats further into the carrier until the cat must go all the way into the carrier to get them. Do not close the door. Allow the cat to go in and out of the carrier freely.
- Once your cat is comfortable going all the way into the carrier to get treats, you can start feeding his meals in there. You can also start closing the carrier door for a few seconds at a time. At first, make sure you re-open the door before he gets worried about it - preferably while he is busy eating.
- Now start to gradually lengthen the period of time you leave the door closed, working up to about 10 minutes over a period of weeks.

If possible, leave the carrier out for your cat to go in and out of whenever he wants. You may be surprised. Some cats actually like to sleep in the carrier and will choose it as a favorite napping spot.