

Leash Training Your Cat

Courtesy of Four Paws (www.fourpaws.com)

Some cat owners enjoy taking their cat for walks on a leash. This can be a great way for your cat to get some fresh air and a chance for the two of you to bond. However, don't expect your cat to heel the way a dog does; he'll more likely just follow along behind you. Teaching your cat to walk on a leash is actually quite simple, and the younger he is when you start training him, the easier it will be.

The first step is to get your cat used to wearing a cat harness. Encourage him and give him some food rewards as he gets comfortable with it. Have him wear the harness for a little while each day for about a week until he seems quite at ease with it. Next, connect a leash to the harness and let him walk around the house with the leash dragging behind him. Do this for a short time each day until he is used to the weight and feel of it. Then, start walking him on the leash inside the house. Let him wander around wherever he wants to, but keep a hold of the leash.

Once your cat is comfortable wearing the harness and leash, and having you hold the leash, take him out into the yard. If he gets scared, let him back inside. If he seems to enjoy spending time walking on a leash in the yard, try taking him to other places. Avoid busy areas with lots of people and/or cars, at least for his first few walks. He should gradually get used to all kinds of different situations and different people, and you should be able to take him just about anywhere.