

If you're in the habit of storing your cat carrier out of sight until the day it's needed, your cat is likely to be tipped off that something "bad" is about to happen the moment they set eyes on the carrier. Cats are likely to become anxious at the mere sight of the carrier if the only time they see it is when it's time to go to the vet. **You can help acclimate your cat to the carrier by following these steps.**

### Get the right size carrier

A large carrier is sometimes the only way to go because it can be impossible to squeeze a big cat through a narrow door. Our personal favorite: [this top-loading carrier](#).

### Keep the carrier out

One mistake owners make is storing their carrier in the garage or a closet, ensuring their cat bolts for the craftiest hiding place when the box comes out. By keeping the carrier part of your cat's environment, it becomes less scary and even a place they like to hang out!

### Make it positive

At first, feed your cat their favorite treat (tuna, canned food, etc.) near the carrier. When they're comfortable being in close proximity, try placing treats inside the carrier to lure them in. Once they're okay inside, shut the door and leave them inside the carrier for just a few minutes. When letting them out, give more treats! You're rewarding your cat for being inside the carrier and over time, they will begin to have a positive association.

### Cozy up the space

Line it with newspaper or a pee pad to soak up any accidents the day of travel, and always keep a comfy towel inside. Some cats find a dark cubbyhole more comfortable than a wide-open space. You can achieve this by simply covering the carrier with a towel.

### Spritz pheromones

Cats tend to respond well to relaxing pheromone sprays like [Feliway](#) that you can spritz inside the carrier.

### Consider catnip

Some cats love catnip and can be enticed to enter the carrier if there's some loose catnip inside.



If you follow the steps above, it's possible that when the time comes, your cat will enter the carrier on their own with only a little coaxing from you. But then again, cats will be cats.

**Here's how to get a cat in a carrier if they're resistant or in the case of an emergency.**

*It may help to first move the carrier to a small space such as a bathroom, shut yourself and your cat inside before following these steps.*

If you *don't* have a top-loading carrier, place the carrier on its end with the door pointing toward the ceiling, leaving the door open.

Place a towel over your cat, gently picking them up and wrapping the towel around their body tightly enough to confine their limbs but not so tight that it restricts breathing. Quickly lower the towel-wrapped cat into the carrier and shut the door.