

Considerations for your Cat Carrier:

📦 **Material:** Sturdy materials that resist impact are preferable to softer products because they:

- ✓ provide superior protection
- ✓ cannot collapse under stress
- ✓ provide useful visual barriers
- ✓ can be secured in cars by seatbelts or straps
- ✓ are easy to clean



Coated wire (“cage”) style carriers are acceptable but lack the visual privacy other types of carriers provide. Soft-sided or cardboard carriers are adequate as long as two or more sides have holes or mesh for ventilation; however, they offer the least impact protection, can collapse or be crushed, and can be harder to adequately clean and disinfect.

📦 **Size:** Your carrier should be appropriately-sized for your cat, allowing sufficient room for her to stand up, turn around, and lie comfortably inside in a natural position.

📦 **Doors:** The best carriers offer both front and top openings. Top loading carriers are the easiest and least-stressful options for loading and removing your cat while a front door allows your cat to enter and exit on her own.

📦 **Assembly:** It is highly preferable to use a carrier that can be easily taken apart. Many carriers are assembled with clips allowing the top half to be quietly and simply removed so that your friend can remain in the bottom half with minimal manipulation. When here in the hospital, many patients feel more secure and experience less anxiety when handled in this fashion; we can provide additional security by placing a pheromone-impregnated blanket or towel over your cat while he remains comfortable in the remaining bottom half.

📦 **Visual Security:** It is ideal to provide a carrier that has at least two sides that are relatively solid with few holes; providing these visual obstructions can make many cats feel more secure and may also help them experience less motion-sickness or anxiety originating from movement.

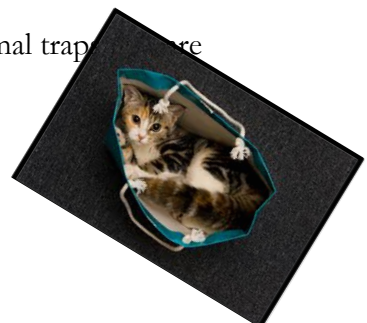


📦 **Permeability:** Your carrier should have a leak-proof bottom covered with absorbent material.

📦 **Identification:** Regardless of type, label your carrier with your name and contact information as well as your cat’s name. Strongly consider microchipping your friend for permanent, unalterable identification!



If you are transporting a feral cat, there are commercial, humane animal traps that are safe for both you and the feline.



Avoid!

- ✗ Pillowcases or other bag-like containers as they may inhibit ventilation, cannot be secured for safety, and do not offer impact protection.
- ✗ Conventional luggage, not designed for animal transport, also offers minimal protection from impacts and cannot be secured readily.
- ✗ Seatbelt restraint systems that are designed for dogs: these are seldom effective at safely restraining cats. Further, they may cause discomfort and anxiety in a cat unaccustomed to wearing a harness.
- ✗ Allowing your cat to roam free in the car. This is extremely dangerous for both you and your cat! Your friend is unprotected and subject to severe injury in the event of an accident; additionally, she may interfere with the proper operation of the vehicle compromising your ability to drive safely. Finally, smaller cats may be able to access inappropriate or dangerous parts of the vehicle from which they may be difficult to retrieve.
- ✗ (when possible) Transporting more than one cat in each carrier: cats that become fearful may redirect that anxiety as aggression against another cat in close proximity. Exceptions include a mother and her litter of kittens or (at home) cats that voluntarily enter and cohabitate an open carrier.

How can I get my cat used to the carrier?



It is best to familiarize your cat to his carrier well before you need to use it. Your goal is to establish the carrier as a safe, comforting place that is a welcoming extension of her customary home environment.

- ✓ Open the door and leave the carrier in an area of your home your cat frequents often; allow her to explore the carrier on her own.
- ✓ Place catnip or other desirable treats in the carrier.
- ✓ Positively reinforce your cat when he enters and enjoys the carrier; never use this space as punishment.
- ✓ Use Feliway or other pheromone sprays or wipes routinely, to minimize anxiety associated with the carrier.
- ✓ Place bedding on which your cat has previously slept in the carrier.
- ✓ Establish the carrier as an ordinary and permanent fixture in your home- treat it as a bed or a preferred hiding place for your friend.