

Taking your cat in the car

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Most cats will have to experience car travel, for example when taken to the veterinary surgery or to a boarding cattery. Some cats find the experience stressful and upsetting, but there are a number of things you can do to make this experience less daunting.

Cat carriers

- Your cat should have access to its carrier in the home, so that he/she does not associate the carrier only with journeys to the veterinary surgery or travel in the car.
- Treats, toys and familiar bedding should be left in the carrier, and the carrier placed somewhere in the home so that it is regarded as a safe and familiar area.
- Carriers with both top and front openings are best, as this makes it much easier to get your cat in and out of the carrier. Carriers that only open from the top are better than carriers that only open from the front.
- Struggles with your cat while getting him/her in and out of the carrier are all too common, but try to avoid them as your cat will rapidly become fearful and difficult to handle, both at home and at the veterinary surgery.
- Unless cats are well socialized to each other and the carrier is spacious, each cat should be transported in its own carrier.

Getting used to the car

- Take your cat for short trips in the car, while safely contained in its carrier, from a young age.
- Car journeys can be slowly increased in duration, provided the cat remains calm.

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Before you travel

- Cats should not be fed immediately before travel, though cat treats can be placed in the carrier.
- A cat pheromone spray, such as Feliway[®], is recommended for having a calming effect on cats during travel, by making them feel more secure in their environment. The product is sprayed in the carrier (surfaces and bedding) about half an hour before the journey.
- A food supplement derived from a milk protein (Zylkene) may have a calming influence and enable your cat to cope better with the journey.

During the journey

- During long journeys cats should be offered water to drink, but it is usually best not to offer food until the end of the journey.
- ❗ If your cat often gets distressed, or vomits, during car journeys, seek advice from your veterinary surgeon.**