

TEACHING YOUR CAT TO WEAR A HARNESS

HOW TO TEACH:

Choosing a harness: Choose an H-type harness or a walking jacket (<http://www.catwalkingjacket.com>). Figure-eight type harnesses are not secure. Adjust the harness so when it is on the cat you can place two fingers between the cat and the harness. For a larger cat, you may need to buy a harness made for a small dog.

Getting your cat used to the harness:

Expect some strange behavior when you first put the harness on. Most cats initially dislike the feeling of the harness, so you'll want to distract your cat in some way while the harness is on. You can put the harness on him at feeding time and have him wear it for a few minutes while he is eating; or play a favorite game with him while he is wearing it or just give him a tasty treat. Keep your sessions to a few minutes. Make each subsequent session with the harness longer. Once the cat is wearing the harness for extended periods of time (ten minutes or more) and acting normally, you can add a leash (see the handout on leash training your cat).

COMMENTS:

Don't leave the cat in a harness unsupervised.

Remember to associate the harness with good things – play, food or treats.

Start out with short session – two minutes or 10 treats at the most.

Be patient – your cat will eventually come to accept the harness.