

Cat Crate Training

Having a cat who is comfortable riding in a crate can be very helpful. Use this multi-step process to help your cat get accustomed to the crate, and maybe even enjoy it!

- **Step 1**

- Put the carrier down to introduce your cat to it. May be best to do it near where they eat. Leave it open (tie the door open or remove the door completely) and let your kitten check it out at their leisure.

- **Tips:**

- You can drop some treats in there to make the crate extra exciting!

- **Step 2**

- Lure your kitten to the crate before dinner time using wet food or treats
- Once kitten is regularly eating from the food near the crate, you can start moving it closer and closer each day or each meal

- **Tips:**

- If you don't meal feed your kitten, we'd recommend changing your cat to feedings twice a day (morning and evening) or as your vet recommends. This will ensure kitten is hungry when you're working with her.
- Use wet food before dinner time to lure your cat towards the crate. Move it as far away as needed so that she'll eat. Some kittens are more shy than others. Gradually move it closer, as long as she's eating the treat, you can move it a bit closer. Do this in small, gradual steps.
- You may need to create a trail ("Hansel and Gretel") of treats that end at the crate
- Try mixing in a tasty treat if wet food alone doesn't work, like tuna, boiled chicken or all meat baby food.

- **Step 3**

- When kitten is comfortable walking up to the crate, you can move the food into the crate for her to eat.
- Go very slowly and make sure that the door is latched open or not on the crate so it doesn't scare her

- **Tips:**

- You may have to start with just front paws in the crate, then gradually have her all the way in the crate.





- If you have a “top loading crate” or one with a door in the front and on top, you can open the top of the crate too at first to be less confining.
- **Step 4**
 - Try play! Play with kitty in the crate, around the crate and on the crate to make it an even more fun space!
- **Step 5**
 - Continue feeding dinner in the crate and begin to close the door
 - **Tips:**
 - If she looks anxious, be sure to open the door immediately and go back a few steps to just having her eat near the crate or just barely inside the crate
- **Step 6**
 - Close the door and lift the crate. Within a few seconds, put it down and open the door again.
 - Gradually increase the time the cat is being carried in the crate.
- **Step 7**
 - Cover the crate with a towel and take it to the car with kitten inside. Sit in car and feed kitten very high value treats before bringing her back inside and opening the crate door.
- **Step 8**
 - Take covered crate and kitten for a short car ride! Make sure kitten has treats and/or a Kong in there.
 - Bring back inside and open crate door.
- **Step 9**
 - You should be ready for vet visits and for class!

More Tips:

- Make sure kitten stays relaxed through this process.
- Always cover the crate when you're out of the house.
- Keep practicing going in and out of the crate and going for short car rides once in a while so your cat doesn't associate the crate with vet all the time!
- Watch this video for a basic overview
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUp5SEK812k&feature=youtu.be>

If you have a pet behavior question or would like some training assistance,
San Diego Humane Society is here to help!

Visit our website at www.sdhumane.org to view our behavior and training options,
or call our **Behavior Helpline at 619-299-7012 ext. 2244** to speak with a trainer.