

Carrier Training cats

By Dr. Yin DVM*

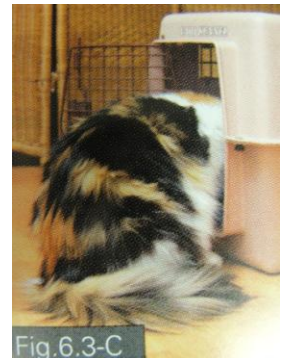
Step one: If the cat really dislikes being confined, start by feeding her daily meals just outside the carrier.



Step two: When she is comfortably eating her meals in this new location, move the food just inside the carrier so she has to stick her head in to eat.



Step three: She should readily stick her head in. When she's comfortable, she'll eat the meal without backing out to look around.



Step four: In this manner, gradually move the food dish farther in until the cat easily goes all the way into the carrier. For most cats, getting to this point takes less than 3-4 days.



Step five: Hide tasty treats or toys (which ever she's most motivated by) in the carrier for her to find through out the day. The goal is for her to explore the carrier for treats or toys.



Step six: The cat should always readily enter the carrier and walk out in a relaxed manner. If she looks vigilant or rushes out, then work in more gradual steps. How do you know when your cat loves her carrier? When she randomly enters and lies down to rest on her own. Some cats even choose to sleep in their carriers.



Step seven: Once the cat is comfortably enters her carrier to rest, the carrier door can be closed during her meal, and she can be kept in the carrier for short periods of time. Gradually work up to enclosing her for longer sessions. This step is optional for cats, where as for dogs it's required. Cats often adapt better than dogs to being in travel carriers.



Completing all of these steps will leave you with a housecat that thinks her crate or carrier is a heavenly haven!

*Taken from the book Low Stress Handling, Restraint and Behavior Modification of Dogs & Cats with permission from Sophia Yin, DVM, MS