

# FAQs About Cats Using Wheelchairs or Carts

With the use of a cart, cats with mobility problems can continue to lead happy, active lives.

## What is a cat cart or wheelchair?

It's a device that assists cats with mobility issues. These extremely light carts, which strap on to the cat's body and provide support, can enable a cat with front or back leg issues to become mobile. Carts allow disabled cats to walk, run, play, exercise, and sometimes even lie down, depending on the model.

## What type of mobility issues are aided by cat carts?

Certain heart conditions, paralysis, cerebellar hypoplasia, congenital spinal or limb issues, injuries or other disabilities can leave cats without the use of one or more limbs. Many times, these cats may otherwise be healthy and able to lead happy, pain-free lives.

## Who determines whether a cat needs a cart?

You should work with a veterinarian to determine whether a cart would be beneficial to your cat. Cats have a keen sense of balance, so some can adjust to an injury or amputated limb and regain some level of mobility on their own. But those who are paralyzed or have difficulty re-learning how to walk may be ideal candidates for a cat cart.

## Are there different types of carts for cats?

The type of cart your cat will need is based on what type of disability he or she has. Carts for cats typically feature two harnesses: one that supports the cat's shoulders and another that supports the cat's hips or pelvic region.

Carts need to be custom-fitted according to your cat's specific measurements and needs. Cats with front limb issues, weakness in all four legs or cerebellar hypoplasia will typically need a four-wheel or quad wheelchair. Cart models that help with hindquarter issues have two wheels that are positioned on either side of where the hind paws would normally make contact with the ground. Different wheel types are used on the carts depending on the terrain or soil type where it will be used.

## Do cats have difficulty becoming accustomed to the cart?

Most cats relish the freedom that a cart provides, so it usually takes only a few days for a cat to adjust. In some cases, it takes a bit longer, and some training and playful persuasion may be necessary to help your cat adjust. Whether or not your cat will be able to adapt to a cart may depend on his or her personality.

## What accommodations for the cart can I make in my home?

Try to keep floor space and pathways as clear and open as possible. If your home has a lot of obstacles to navigate, the cart could get stuck frequently. Also, if you have stairs in your home, you might want to block them with a baby gate so that the cat doesn't fall down the stairs with the cart on.

## Can I leave my cat unattended in the cart?

Your cat should never be left unattended while in the cart. There's a chance that the cart could become stuck or tip over. Your cat may enjoy the freedom of being outdoors in the cart, but he or she must always be supervised when outdoors. You may want to try walking your cat outdoors on a harness and leash.

## How long should my cat be left in the cart?

A well-made cat cart allows your pet to move around the house or outdoors with ease. However, these carts are not made to be worn continually. Cats tend to spend a lot of time napping during the day, so you should remove the cart and harness during nap time for comfort and because sores can develop on contact points. Although a well-fitted cart should not cause soreness, you will need to carefully monitor your cat for signs of sores or abrasions.

For more about caring for and training pets, go to [bestfriends.org/resources/pet-care](https://bestfriends.org/resources/pet-care)