

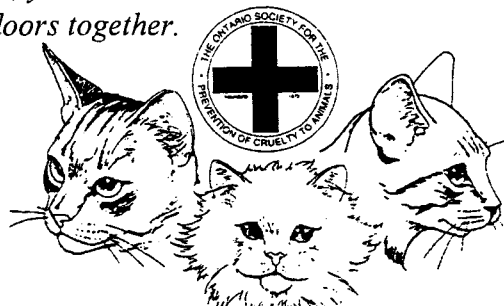
## Harness Training For Cats



*Responsible cat guardianship includes keeping your cat safe and happy. Too many cats become victims of roadway injuries, fall prey to, or fight with, other animals or become hurt by upset neighbours. Harness training is a much easier task than most cat owners think. The Ontario SPCA encourages cat owners to follow these steps to help with harness training of your feline friend.*

1. Be very patient and persistent, and reward your pet lovingly. Yelling, hitting or rough treatment will only teach your cat to fear you and will accomplish nothing.
2. If possible, start training at 6-7 months of age. Have the cat spayed or neutered first, as this enhances their concentration and decreases their desire to roam.
3. Purchase a lightweight "H" shaped nylon harness that buckles at the neck and stomach. It should also have a metal ring on the back portion to hold a proper identification tag and to attach to a lightweight leash. (Collars, figure "8" harnesses and harnesses with breastplates allow cats to slip out too easily.) To find the correct size, measure the cat's neck and stomach snugly, but not tightly. Purchase an identification tag at the same time as purchasing the harness, and have it engraved with your daytime and night-time phone numbers, including area code.
4. Place the harness with the identification tag and leash where the cat can sniff, paw and play with them.
5. After several days, gently, but firmly, put the harness on the cat - allow two fingers width at the neck and stomach (do not attach the leash yet). The best results usually come when this is attempted just before feeding. At this point, the cat may exhibit abnormal behaviour, such as running around the room or lying on his or her side and acting as though he or she can no longer stand. As long as the cat is in safe surroundings, leave the harness on for five minutes. Repeat this several times a day for a week to ten days.
6. Once the cat is comfortable with the harness, attach the identification tag and leash. Let the cat drag the leash around the house for several minutes at a time, several times a day, for another few days. Be sure to supervise the cat to avoid him or her becoming tangled and frightened.
7. Once the cat has accepted this part, pick up the leash and just hold onto it. The cat must now realize he has some restraints placed upon him. While gently pulling on the leash, offer food and say the word "come." Once again, be patient, persistent and loving.
8. Remember, cats usually will not walk on a leash like a dog. Cats usually like to run a bit, stop, roll, sniff an area, eat grass and then carry on.
9. **Never leave a harnessed/leashed cat unsupervised.** Once your cat is tied up she is totally defenceless and could fall prey to other roaming animals, or become tangled, frightened or injured.

*With some patience and persistence, your cat can become trained on a harness allowing you and her an opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors together.*



**THE ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS**  
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