

Training the Cats in Your Care to Wear a Collar

We typically put collars on dogs immediately upon arrival to the animal centre, but seldom, if ever, put them on cats. Adopters are more likely to keep a collar on their cat, if the cat already has one at the time of adoption. In addition to microchipping, a collar with identification tags can assist in getting the cat back home if it gets lost. People also identify a collar with ownership...a cat with a collar is someone's cat!

Tips on choosing and fitting a collar

- Make sure you choose a collar with an elastic insert ("stretch" collar) or quick release mechanism (pop-away collars), so that your cat can free itself should it become entangled in anything
- The collar should be snug enough not to pull over the cat's head easily, but loose enough for you to fit two fingers between the collar and the cat's neck. Cut off long collar ends after fitting the collar

Getting the cat used to the collar:

The cat might not appreciate a collar at first, but with patience and consistency you can teach it to accept a collar. Choose a calm time for your cat's first introduction to the collar. If you try to put the collar on your cat when it is already stressed, you're likely to have problems.

- First put the collar on the ground so the cat can investigate and play with it.
- Spray with Feliway
- Another technique is to rub a facecloth gently around the cat's mouth and cheeks to get some of the cat's own scent, then rub the collar with the cloth, so the collar smells familiar. Rubbing the collar on the cat's bedding may also prove effective
- Once the collar is on, use reassuring words and plenty of treats to reward the cat, and let him or her get used to it for a little while before taking it off
- You should aim to do this daily for gradually increasing lengths of time, until it seems the cat is getting more and more comfortable with wearing the collar

Short sessions, rewards, persistence and patience are crucial for success!

NOTE: In the beginning, you may discover that the cat becomes clever at slipping the collar off. Whenever this happens, simply replace the collar and give rewards and play. Check that the collar is fitted properly. Eventually most cats will get used to wearing a collar. We typically put collars on dogs immediately upon arrival to the animal centre, but seldom, if ever, put them on cats. Adopters are more likely to keep a collar on their cat, if the cat already has one at the time of adoption. In addition to microchipping, a collar with identification tags can assist in getting the cat back home if it gets lost. People also identify a collar with ownership...a cat with a collar is someone's cat!

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