Training a Cat to Walk on a Leash

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Q. Can you train a cat to walk on a leash?

A. Although we are unsure about your cat, many cats can be taught to walk on a leash. The younger you start your cat in the training process, the more likely you will be successful.

First, start by getting your cat used to a harness. A harness is much better than a collar for a cat; cats are less likely to escape from a harness, and a harness is safer than a collar if your cat gets caught up in something like a bush or a tree limb.

When your cat is used to the harness, tie a rope to the harness and let the cat drag the rope behind it. This gets the cat used to the feel of something pulling on the harness.

Get your cat used to the outdoors by taking it outside on a leash during a quiet time of the day, when there is less traffic and noise.

By rewarding your cat with special treats, like small pieces of chicken, you can coax your cat to walk along with you on the leash. Walk your cat in areas that are of interest to a cat - a grassy spot with rustling leaves is much more fun (and less scary) than a concrete sidewalk along a busy street.

Good luck!

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