

Three Reasons Your Cat is Laying Down In Its Harness (And What to Do About It)

So, you've decided to introduce your kitty to the great outdoors.

You've read tons of advice, purchased a matching harness and leash that fit your cat perfectly, and you're confident that both of you are ready to take the first step toward exciting outdoor adventures!

Except that right after you strap your kitty into its fancy new harness, it takes a few steps, sways back and forth, and flops on the ground, refusing to stand back up.

What went wrong? Why do cats lay down in their harnesses?

I've dealt with this problem multiple times with several different cats and although it can be frustrating, I'm here to give you hope! Here are three reasons your cat might forget how to "cat" when it wears its harness, and what you can do to make the process more enjoyable for both of you.

The Harness Might Not Fit Well

First things first - check the fit of your kitty's harness. You should be able to slip just one finger between your cat's body and the harness, but any snugger than that might constrict your cat's movement.

Additionally, make sure that the cut and shape of the harness works with your cat's body. Some common problem areas are under the armpits and across the shoulders. If the harness cuts into your cat's pits as they walk, they might not want to move very much.

They Need to Get Used to Their Harness

Let's face it - cats aren't typically huge fans of new sensations and change. That's not to say they'll never adjust, but it might take a little while!

With all of its straps, a harness is a lot to get used to. Plus, cats have little bodies and even though their harness might not feel heavy to you, it's heavy to them!

The solution here is to just give your kitty time to adjust. Let them wear the harness while they eat or play to associate it with positive things, and they'll be comfortable before you know it. You can also find more tips for helping your cat love its harness right [here](#).

Your Cat Might Prefer a Different Harness Style

Harnesses come in all shapes and sizes, and while the most important thing is selecting one that is safe and secure, you can also consider your cat's personal preference.

For example, our cats like the secure feeling of harnesses that fit like a vest, but other kitties prefer the lightweight feeling of a strappy harness. I talk about selecting the right harness in more detail [here](#).

One last note - I know we've all seen those videos of people dragging their cats across the ground because they refuse to walk in their harness, but please, please never do that! It could hurt your cat by straining its arms, and even if it doesn't hurt them, it will definitely scare them and make them even more afraid of their harness and going outside.

Treat your feline friend with patience, understanding, and respect, and you'll have an adventure companion and trusting friend for life!