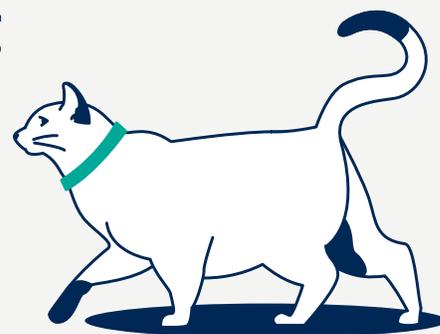


# What Is a Healthy Weight for Cats?

**As a pet parent, you may be wondering what an ideal weight is for your cat.**

Carrying excess weight makes your pet much more likely to develop health issues like diabetes, urinary disease, and arthritis. On the other hand, cats who are underweight may have an underlying condition that's causing the unexplained weight loss.



**So what weight is considered healthy for an average cat?**

## What Should My Cat Weigh?

Typically, the ideal weight for a cat is 8 to 12 pounds. However, there are some breeds that will be a healthy weight that's much higher than 12 pounds.

Healthy cats come in a variety of sizes. A vet will determine a cat's ideal weight by their body frame size and lean muscle mass.

## How Is My Cat's Ideal Weight Determined?

This chart categorizes the body condition of a cat on a 9-point scale—with 9 being very obese and 1 being extremely emaciated. Ideally, your cat should fall into the 4–5 range.

**To determine a cat's body condition score, a cat needs to be physically and visually evaluated:**

- A healthy cat has only a very small amount of fat covering their ribs. So when your veterinarian runs their hands over your cat's rib cage, they should be able to feel their ribs without having to search through a layer of fat.
- A vet will then stand above your cat and look down. Your cat's body should have a slight hourglass shape as the abdomen tucks in behind their rib cage.
- When your vet looks at your cat from the side, their abdomen should only slightly be tucked up behind the rib cage and have very minimal abdominal fat.

# What Is a Healthy Weight for Cats?

## Does My Cat's Age and Breed Affect Their Weight?

**Yes! Your cat's age and breed can affect their weight.**

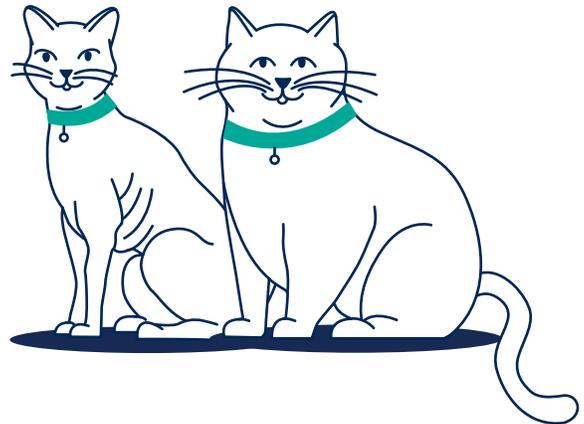
In kittenhood, cats will grow rapidly and gain weight quickly, but this is healthy and part of the natural growing process. After your cat is spayed or neutered, their metabolism may change—making it more likely for them to put on excess weight.

As they age, most cats put on excess pounds due to their changing metabolism and more sedentary lifestyle. It's important to work with your veterinarian at annual checkups to assess how your cat's weight is changing as they age.

**When it comes to different cat breeds, their body sizes can significantly impact their weight:**

- Some breeds, like the Abyssinian, are long and slim with delicate features.
  - These more petite cats can have a healthy body weight of as little as 6–8 pounds.
- Maine Coon cats are bred to have a medium to large body frame with broad chests and strong features. This big breed may have a healthy body weight of over 20 pounds.

The best way to learn if your cat is at a healthy weight is to work with your veterinarian. They can evaluate your specific cat's body frame, muscle mass, and breed to determine what your pet's ideal healthy weight is.



## How Can I Help My Cat Lose Weight?

Before putting your cat on a weight loss/exercise plan, make sure to get approval from their veterinarian.

## How Can I Help My Cat Gain Weight?

If your cat isn't at the weight they should be, you can work with your veterinarian to find out if you should be increasing their food intake or whether it's caused by an underlying health issue. Inexplicable weight loss can be a result of several conditions. Whether your pet is overweight or underweight, your vet can help figure out the issue and tailor recommendations to their individual needs.