

PEAK PURRFORMANCE



CAT AMBASSADOR CERTIFICATION TEST

Handbook

WELCOME

Cats can excel at being friendly and fit members of the community; it's time to define what modern, responsible cat guardianship looks like! Our Cat Ambassador Certification is a test that demonstrates that your cat is a friendly, safe member of the community. The certification has 10 test items including handling, accepting a friendly person, and basic obedience.

As you train your cat for the certification, you will become an expert at reading cat body language to better understand what your cat is telling you. You will strengthen the trust that your cat has in you as you train with reward-based methods.

Your cat will have confidence at the vet, groomer, and with caregivers while you are traveling, which will make these situations less stressful for the cat and the staff interacting with them. You and your cat will become an ambassador for their species by showing that cats can be well-behaved, social, and confident both in and outside of the home.

The Cat Ambassador program is open to all purebred and mixed-breed cats 6 months and older. The test items are reviewed by our team through video submissions through our application form. Once accepted, you will receive a certificate and a patch to show that you and your cat are a well-behaved, friendly feline resident and responsible cat guardian team that sets a good example in public!

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1. Practice the exercises with your cat
2. Take videos of each exercise according to the video guidelines
3. Fill out the CAC application form and link/upload the videos
4. Read and sign the CAC pledge
5. We will process your application
6. When it is approved, you will receive a passcode to finish the process and purchase your certification
7. You will receive your certificate and patch in the mail!

Forms can be found and filled out online at:

<https://www.peakpurrformance.com/cat-ambassador-certification>



STRESS-RELATED BEHAVIORS

- Running away
- Hissing
- Swatting / striking
- Arched back
- Piloerection/puffed tail (hair standing up)
- Growling
- Escape attempt
- Ears flat / down
- Hiding
- Tail tucked
- Scratching
- Biting
- Yowling
- Eyes dilated
- Wide-eyed stare
- Whiskers back
- Holding a front paw up
- Lying down with head low, head and body stiff
- Licking lips

THE PLEDGE

The Cat Ambassador Certification requires the cat guardian to sign a pledge promising to be a responsible guardian. By signing this, guardians will promise to take good care of their cats, provide them an optimal quality of life, and set a good example for the way people everywhere should treat their companions.

The pledge can be filled out electronically at peakpurrformance.com/cat-ambassador-certification.

Alternatively, you can print the pledge, sign it, and mail it to us. If you wish to do this option, email info@peakpurrformance.com and we will provide our mailing address.

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THE PLEDGE

- 1. I will provide my cat with the veterinary care needed to live a healthy, comfortable life.**
 - a. I will keep my cat up-to-date on necessary vaccines to keep them healthy and to abide by local laws.**
 - b. I recognize that declawing is a painful, unnecessary procedure and promise not to declaw my cat in the future.**

- 2. I will provide my cat with an appropriate species-specific diet that provides them with the necessary nutrients to keep them healthy and well-fed.**

- 3. I recognize that my cat's physical appearance reflects their internal health.**
 - a. I will keep my cat well-groomed/brushed and clip their nails to avoid pain.**
 - b. As obesity is linked to many health problems, I will do my best to keep my cat an appropriate weight. If my cat is overweight, I will provide a healthy diet and exercise to get them to a healthier weight.**

- 4. I understand that both physical and mental stimulation are essential to an optimal quality of life. I will provide my cat exercise and enrichment so that they can be healthy, both physically and mentally.**

THE PLEDGE

5. I will provide my cat a litter box and their preferred substrate to set them up for housetraining success.

6. I will use a microchip and/or collar tags to allow for proper identification. This will keep my cat safe if they get out of the house and better enable their safe return home.

7. I understand that free-roaming cats can be a nuisance to indoor cats and have a detrimental effect on songbird populations. I also recognize that going outside unsupervised is a safety risk. I promise to do my best to keep my cat indoors, and only take them outside with proper supervision and equipment.

8. When I take my cat in public I will do my best to be a responsible cat guardian and set a good example for others. I will clean up and dispose of my cat's waste and otherwise be a good ambassador for cat owners everywhere.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

A FRIENDLY VISITOR

1. Accepting a Friendly Visitor

This part of the test will demonstrate that a visitor is able to enter your home while your cat stays calm.

The visitor will come through a door and walk 5 feet into the room where the cat is located, but not approach the cat.

The recording will be 90 seconds.

The cat can hide initially, but they must recover in time for the test evaluator to observe 30 seconds of behavior. The cat's entire body must be visible for all 90 seconds so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior. The visitor can make small talk with the cat guardian and then walk out the door to finish this test item.

The video can be recorded by the cat guardian or tripod.

A FRIENDLY VISITOR

2. Greeting a Friendly Visitor

This test item will demonstrate that a visitor is able to approach your cat and that the cat can either settle or interact with the visitor in an affiliative way.

The cat can hide initially, but they must recover in time for the test evaluator to observe 30 seconds of behavior. Your cat does not need to do any specific interactions to pass this test item; they just cannot display two or more stress-related behaviors from the specified list.

The visitor will start 5 feet from the cat. They will walk up to the cat and gently reach a hand out toward them. The cat can choose to stay there, sniff, or interact with the visitor as long as they are not showing two or more stress-related behaviors. If they do hide, they need to be able to recover and come out so the evaluator can assess them for 30 seconds in the video.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

HANDLING & GROOMING

3. Grooming

This part of the test will demonstrate that the guardian is able to groom and handle the cat. Grooming is an important part of keeping your cat healthy and is crucial for discovering parasites or ailments.

The guardian will run the cat's brush from head to base of the tail two times in a row. The cat must not show two or more stress-related behaviors while the guardian is brushing.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

The guardian may give one treat at the end for completing this test item.

HANDLING & GROOMING

4. Body Handling

Petting: The guardian will gently pet the cat from head to tail three times.

Paw lift: The guardian will lift one front paw of the cat.

Picking Up: The guardian will lift the cat off of the ground, hold them in whichever way the cat prefers for 15 seconds, and place the cat back onto the ground.

Tail Pull: Very gently pull up on the tail with slight pressure. This does not apply to tailless cats.

The cat must not show two or more stress-related behaviors while being handled.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

The guardian may give one treat per test item.

BASIC OBEDIENCE

5. Sit

The guardian will ask their cat to sit using a verbal (voice) cue and/or visual cue. They will not repeat the cue more than once.

The guardian must not use a treat lure to ask their cat to sit, but may give praise and a treat after the cat completes the sit.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

BASIC OBEDIENCE

6. Nose Target

The guardian will ask their cat to touch their nose to the guardian's finger or a target stick. They will not repeat the target cue.

The guardian must not use a treat lure to ask their cat to target, but may give praise and a treat after the cat completes the behavior.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

BASIC OBEDIENCE

7. Recall

The guardian will call their cat to come from 10 feet away using a verbal cue. They will not repeat the cue more than once.

The guardian may use praise as the cat moves toward them, and give a treat when the behavior is completed.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

BASIC OBEDIENCE

8. Send to a Target

The guardian will send their cat to a target (i.e., mat, bed, perch) from 5 feet away using a verbal (voice) cue and/or visual cue. They will not repeat the cue(s) more than once.

The guardian must not use a treat lure to get their cat onto the target, but may give praise and a treat when the behavior is completed.

The cat's entire body must be visible in the video so the evaluator can observe the cat's behavior.

ON THE GO

9. Accepting the Carrier

The guardian will send their cat to the carrier using a visual and/or verbal cue. The cue may also be the open door of the carrier.

The guardian may not use a treat to lure the cat into the carrier, but can give a treat once the cat is inside.

The guardian will close the carrier door and film for one minute. The video must be close enough so that the test evaluator can observe the cat's behavior and body language. The cat must not display two or more stress-related behaviors.

ON THE GO

10. Wearing a Harness

The guardian will put the cat's harness on and secure it. The guardian may give one treat for this test item.

The video must show the cat's entire body so that the evaluator can observe their behavior and body language. The cat must accept the harness and not display two or more stress-related behaviors.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATON

Training Resources for Success

Kitten Kindergarten Course:

<https://school.spacecatakademy.com/p/kitten-kindergarten>

Head-to-Tail Communication Guide:

<https://school.spacecatakademy.com/p/free-head-to-tail-communication-guide>

Rapid & Reliable Recall Course:

<https://school.spacecatakademy.com/p/rapid-reliable-recall>

Carrier Confidence Course:

<https://school.spacecatakademy.com/p/carrier-confidence>

Harness Training Course:

<https://school.spacecatakademy.com/p/harness-training-course>

Purrfect Pedicure Guide:

<https://school.spacecatakademy.com/p/purrfect-pedicure-guide>

