

Can You Lead a Cat to Water?

It's important for cats to stay hydrated, and everyone has their own tips for getting their cats to drink water.

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MeeserAs a result of cats living longer, many are being diagnosed with kidney disease. I dealt with this myself with my Siamese, Meeser. He had to be on subcutaneous fluids for the balance of his life and it was extremely important for him to stay hydrated.

Many years ago, I read advice that owners keep a water dish in a separate location from their cats' food dishes. It was hypothesized that cats don't like to drink where they eat. I figured it couldn't hurt to try this, and set up a second water dish in my bathroom area.

The cats immediately started drinking more water. I was still keeping a dish by their food, but after a while removed it because it was never used. But the dish in the bathroom has at least a cup of water disappear every day.

Since I know it is important for the cats to drink fresh water, I also tried one of the automatic drinking fountains. Zooey liked it but my other two kitties didn't, so I went back to a crystal bowl with a wide opening. That shape allows the cats to put their entire face into the dish without their whiskers touching the sides. They seem to prefer that as well.

Some of my pet-sitting clients set up coffee mugs with water on their bedside tables for their cats. And I remember my dad used to keep a glass on the counter for his cat to drink from. Some owners I know have cats that lick water from the shower or request the kitchen or bathroom faucets be turned on so they can get fresh running water.

It's a good idea to make sure your cats have alternatives for obtaining the fresh water they need to stay healthy. If you have any other tips for getting your kitties to drink, please feel free to share them.

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