

## Cats at the Wedding - CatChannel.com

**Cat lover and CAT FANCY Consumer Marketing Manager Suzanne Stowe blogs about assisting with the cats at her friends' nuptials.**

*By Suzanne Stowe*

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Murray and Missy in the carrier, waiting to be strolled down the aisle. I am so pleased to join CatChannel.com as a blogger. I am truly Crazy for Cats and will be writing about my experiences with felines, including my work at CAT FANCY magazine, pet sitting, and creating cat crafts.

Recently, I was approached by some casual friends who asked if I would help them include their three cats in their wedding. I had heard about dogs participating in wedding ceremonies before, but never cats. I got some details about the wedding, including the fact that it would be held outside. I was concerned until the bride and groom assured me the cats would be in the mesh stroller carriers the entire time.

After many e-mails going over plans, I agreed to help them. In preparation for the wedding, I stayed with the cats for several visits and coaxed them into their carriers so they would already be comfortable in that environment. Usually, throwing a treat into the back of the carrier worked, but not every time.

On the day of the ceremony, I went over to my friends' house a little early to allow myself plenty of time to get three cats into two different strollers. Missy, their black and white diva kitty, was easily coaxed into a carrier with shredded pork. Then Murray, a handsome orange and white boy, went in with no trouble. However, Qzarina, their small Maine Coon lookalike, wasn't cooperative at first. After 15 minutes of searching, I found her on a window ledge and used more shredded pork to coax her down so I could grab her. Once I had Qzarina, I popped her into the carrier with Murray and we were off to the wedding.

The bride and groom kissing before the ceremony with Missy in the carrier. Once we arrived, we attached the wheels to the strollers and got the cats ready to be strolled down the aisle. Murray and Qzarina made their appearances but Missy stayed in the back of the stroller the entire ceremony. The cats were a big hit with family and friends and were very well-behaved during the ceremony.

Afterward, they posed for photos with the bride and groom, and rest of the wedding party. Luckily, I had brought a few feather toys to catch their attention, so they looked directly at the photographer.

After the photos, we loaded the kitties back into my car for the drive home. Once home, the cats hungrily ate their dinner then curled up for naps. This had been a very exciting day for them and for me too!

Here are some tips for taking your kitty to a special event:

- \*Planning is key. Work out as many details in advance as possible.
- \*Practice putting kitty in the carrier so she is comfortable. Use treats to entice her into the carrier ahead of time so on the day you need to transport her, it will be easier.
- \*Make sure there is shade or air conditioning/heating as appropriate.
- \*Keep kitty restrained in the carrier or with a figure-8 harness. You don't want to be running through the event chasing after kitty.
- \*Take feather toys or other favorites to help get the poses you want for the pictures. They also help distract kitty while waiting for her grand entrance.
- \*Keep calm throughout the event, because cats will pick up on your stress.
- \*Make sure someone is with your cat at all times.

\*Plan the schedule so kitty can leave the event after a short period of time.

\*And, most importantly, enjoy yourself!

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