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AVERAGE CAT WEIGHT: THE IDEAL RANGE FOR A HEALTHY FELINE



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Article checked by a vet

Cats come in all shapes and sizes, depending on their breed, sex, age, activity levels and diet. Like humans, cats can be identified as underweight or overweight too, with both presenting potential health risks. It's best if your cat is of average weight for their breed, as this is better for their overall health and well-being, can improve their quality of life and extend their lifespan.

In this article, we look at average cat weights, factors that affect a cat's weight, risks of being underweight or overweight, and what you can do as a pet parent to maintain a healthy weight for your cat.

Every cat is different, and what is assumed average weight for your cat also depends on their diet, exercise levels and lifestyle too. As a cat owner, you will know your cat best, and it's important to consult a veterinarian before determining whether your cat is underweight

or overweight.

If your cat is underweight, there may be an underlying health issue that is causing them to lose weight. Being underweight could mean your cat has nutritional deficiencies, which can lead to other problems such as: a weaker immune system, less muscle mass causing difficulty with mobility, poor regulation of body temperature, and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar levels) which can cause weakness and fatigue.

If your cat is overweight, they are at higher risk of developing diabetes, kidney disease, pancreatitis, arthritis leading to difficulty with mobility, heart disease which can cause high blood pressure, respiratory issues and liver disease.

If your cat is experiencing any unusual symptoms, or is noticeably underweight or overweight, it's essential you take them to the vet as soon as possible for a full assessment.

Factors that affect a cat's weight

Every cat is different, therefore what is considered a healthy weight for each individual cat will vary. There are many factors that affect the average weight of a cat, and we explain each of these below.

Breed type

Different cat breeds will have different weight ranges. Some cat breeds are genetically larger, such as Maine Coons and Ragdolls, whilst others are much smaller, such as Siamese or Abyssinians. Large cat breeds can weigh up to 11kg, whilst smaller cat breeds may only weigh around 2kg. It's important to look at the average cat weight in kg for your cat's breed to see whether they are underweight or overweight.

Age and Sex

Your cat's average weight will also be influenced by their age and sex. The average male cat weighs slightly more than the average female cat. Your cat may also experience fluctuation in weight across their lifetime. As cats get older, their activity levels may decrease. If they are still eating the same amounts but using less energy, this may lead to your cat putting on weight. We discuss further on activity levels below.

Activity level

Whether your cat is an indoor or an outdoor cat may also impact their weight. Outdoor cats may get more exercise than indoor cats, as they have a wider range to roam. However, outdoor cats may also visit neighbours for extra food or treats. This can lead to them becoming overweight, if they still receive their regular meals at home.

Indoor cats may be at risk of becoming lazy if they are not getting enough exercise at home. They may not use as much energy, potentially leading to them gaining excess weight. It's important to stimulate mobility for your indoor cat, and we give some suggestions [here](#).

Diet and nutrition

Diet and nutrition can affect the average weight of cats. If you're regularly overfeeding your cat or offering an excessive amount of high-calorie treats daily, this can cause your cat to become overweight. While it's generally okay to leave dry food out for your cat to graze on throughout the day, some cats are unable to regulate their food intake and may overeat.

Sometimes cats can overeat, lose or gain weight for medical reasons. A cat with hyperthyroidism will appear to be extremely hungry, eating far more than normal yet losing weight at the same time. A cat with hypothyroidism may be eating normally but gaining extra weight. If your cat's eating habits change, it's always worth getting them checked by your vet.

On the other hand, if you are offering too little food to your cat, they may lose essential muscle mass and become underweight. Your [cat's nutritional needs](#) are very important in maintaining a healthy weight.

PERFECT FIT™ provides feeding guidelines on the back of all of their [cat food products](#), which makes it easier for owners to see what amount is appropriate for their cat according to their weight.

Neutering

If your cat has been neutered/spayed, they require [10-20% less energy \(open in new tab\)](#), and yet their appetite increases due to changes in their metabolic rate. This makes cats three times more likely to become obese after the procedure. Although neutering/spaying is beneficial to your cat long-term, it's important to keep an eye out for any weight gain afterwards and manage this with veterinarian advice.

We detail some of the signs of underweight and overweight cats below.

How do you know if your cat is a healthy weight?

Signs of an underweight cat

If you can easily feel your cat's rib cage, spine, shoulder blades and hipbones, then your cat may be underweight as they are lacking in body fat. You should seek veterinary advice promptly, and ensure your cat is receiving an appropriate amount of food. If your [cat is not eating](#), and it has been more than 24 hours since their last meal, you should take them to the vet immediately as cats can get extremely sick very quickly without food.

Signs of an overweight cat

If you struggle to feel your cat's ribcage or waistline, and there is a noticeable layer of fat as well as a flabby belly, your cat may be overweight as they have an excess of body fat. You should consult a veterinarian before implementing a weight loss diet, ensure your cat is receiving an appropriate amount of food, and increase their activity levels.

Tips for maintaining your cats healthy weight

It's important to consult with a vet before implementing any changes to your cat's lifestyle, so you can work together to achieve a healthy weight for your cat. Below are some suggestions to help maintain your cat's healthy weight.

Diet

It's essential to provide an age-appropriate and balanced diet for your cat to meet their nutritional requirements at different life stages. Avoid feeding them human foods as some are toxic to cats and most are high in calories. Make sure you are offering an appropriate amount of food at each meal, and providing the correct ratio of dry and wet food for your cat. You can read up more on the [benefits of mixed feeding](#), and check out PERFECT FIT™ cat products for both [wet and dry food](#) options.

Exercise

Whether your cat is an indoor or outdoor cat, they should be exercising daily to maintain an average cat weight. Take time to play with your cat, as this is a great bonding experience for you both. You can also provide interactive toys to get your cat running around, and this could be as simple as a rolled up ball of paper. You should also have some sort of scratching post in your house, or even a cat tree if you have the space, to encourage your cat to climb.

Enrichment

A great way to maintain a healthy weight for your cat is to get them [moving at mealtimes](#). Cats are natural hunters, and would much prefer to work for their food than to always have it placed directly in front of them. You can use puzzle feeding toys which will release dry food as your cat rolls around and plays with it. This will encourage your cat to move around, and is also great for mental stimulation and enrichment.

Weigh cats regularly and measure progress

You've heard the phrase, it's a marathon not a sprint - and when it comes to weight changes for cats, it's more like a jog. If your cat is overweight and you've created a weight loss diet with your vet, there will be controlled progress as [cats should not lose more than 1-2% body weight per week \(open in new tab\)](#).

For underweight cats, you can offer small meals more regularly to encourage them to eat more, and look to [increase their calories by around 20% \(open in new tab\)](#), depending on your vet's advice. You should aim to weigh your cat regularly to measure progress, and reassess using the [Waltham Weight Guide](#) every 2 weeks.

It's important to maintain a healthy weight for your cat in order to ensure a better quality of life. so you can enjoy many more happy years together. Your cat's weight should be around the average cat weight for their breed, age and sex.

It's essential that you consult a vet before determining if your cat is underweight or overweight and making any changes. Learn more about [how much and how often to feed a cat](#), so you can keep your cat on track for an average cat weight during each life stage.

FAQs

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1. **How do you know if your cat is a healthy weight?**

There are ways you can identify whether your cat is overweight or underweight at home, although you should always consult a vet before making any changes to their diet. The [Waltham Weight Guide](#) provides a flow chart diagram you can follow to determine whether your cat's weight is average or not.

2. **Why is a cat's weight important?**

It's essential for cat owners to maintain a healthy weight for their cats, as being underweight or overweight can have a serious impact on your cat's health.

3. **What is the average cat weight?**

The average weight for adult cats ranges between 4-4.5kg. However, this depends on a number of factors, including your cat's breed, sex and age. Larger cat breeds, such as Maine Coon, can weigh up to 11kg, whilst some smaller cat breeds like Devon Rex can weigh only 2kg. Besides that, the average weight of male cats tends to be slightly higher than the average female cat weight.

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