



## Three Key Indicators That Your Cat May Need to Shed Pounds

*Disclaimer: Always check with your veterinarian before changing your pet's diet.*

### Is Your Cat Overweight

There are a couple of tell-tale signs that your cat may be overweight.

#### Grooming

Cats are clean animals. They like to groom themselves often. So, if you see that their hind end looks unkempt, this might be a sign that they have gained a few too many extra pounds.

Scotting can happen but generally this is when the anal glands are impacted. If you or your veterinarian have expressed them and your cat is still scotting and further is leaving feces markings all over, this might be a sign that your cat cannot reach far enough to clean themselves properly and may need to lose a few pounds.

#### Play

Has your cat lost interest in that fish on a pole? What about that crinkly sounding ball? Cats are a fickle bunch and even the newest toy can be rejected. However, if your cat has lost interest in playing all together, it may be a weight issue.

## Feline Figure

Another way to see if your cat is on the heavy side is to use the *Body Condition Score for Cats*. A diagram from Catster.com is shown below. The top row is how your cat looks from above. The middle row is how your cat looks from the side. The bottom half is the result of your observations.



Source: <https://www.catster.com/cat-health-care/how-much-should-a-cat-weigh/>

## **Yes, Your Cat is Overweight - What To Do Now**

Do not panic. You and your cat can handle this. Losing a bit of weight will help you and your cat live longer, healthier and happier lives. I have a few tips and tricks that will start you on your way.

### Feeding

Before you go out and spend tons of money on diet or raw food (which may upset your cat's tummy), check to make sure you are not overfeeding. This is one of the most common culprits of cat obesity. If you are, here is a tip that might help. Get a jar and each morning put in the exact amount of food that your cat will be served that day. Once that is gone, the next fill up is in the morning. This also keeps the cat parent accountable. The packaging on the container of cat food should have the feeding instructions. You will want to feed the amount for the desired weight, not for your cat's current weight.

Example: You have a female Domestic cat that is 13 pounds. The chart below is the ideal weight ranges from Pet Obesity Prevention.

Cat Breed	Female Weight (pounds)	Female Weight (kilograms)	Male Weight (pounds)	Male Weight (kilograms)
Domestic	8-10 lb	3.6-4.5 kg	8-10 lb	3.6-4.5 kg
Himalayan	7-12 lb	3.2-5.4 kg	7-12 lb	3.2-5.4 kg
Maine Coon	10-15 lb	4.5-5.8 kg	15-25 lb	6.8-11.3 kg
Persian	7-12 lb	3.2-5.4 kg	7-12 lb	3.2-5.4 kg
Siamese	7-10 lb	3.2-4.5 kg	7-10 lb	3.2-4.5 kg

Source: <https://www.petobesityprevention.org/ideal-weight-ranges>

The feeding guidelines on your package of cat food reads as follows.

FEEDING GUIDELINES:	
Cat's Weight	Amount Daily
5 - 10 LB	1/2 - 3/4 cup*
11 - 16 LB	3/4 - 1 cup*
*using a standard 8 OZ measuring cup.	

You would not feed your cat the 11-16 LB amount (current weight range), but you would feed your cat the 5-10 LB range (desired weight range).

### Treats

Treats are the spice of life for many cats. It takes just a shake of the package to bring them running. You do not need to disappoint, just give them two versus five. It may not seem like that much of a difference, but we are talking about a rather small weight overall.

### Playing

You will most likely find that your cat becomes more playful. Take advantage of this and show your affection and appreciation for a job well done and extend playtime or encourage more blocks of playtime. This will help both you and your cat get through this period a bit happier.

### Outcome

If you do not see a difference in two weeks, see your veterinarian for a check-in. I followed these steps with my own cat and saw a marked improvement in just one week. She was not

happy at first because she was used to the free feeding at any time of the day or night. After a few days, we got into a schedule of breakfast, lunch and dinner – a third of the total daily amount per serving. Of course, the treats were still given, but only three once or twice a day. Turns out she really was not fond of the fish on a pole toy, but she loved the little character with ribbons.

A healthy weight can help keep your cat happy and healthy, which will also help you to be a very happy cat parent.