Living inside a home can be extremely frustrating and limiting to cats. One alternative to a free-range cat is teaching your cat to walk on a leash and exploring with them outside on a regular basis. While it’s easier to get started with a kitten, any cat can be conditioned to a harness. That being said, if your cat is stressed, don’t push them — there are plenty of ways to have fun indoors.

All cats should be microchipped, especially those venturing into the world beyond. A microchip is a small identification injected into your cat’s upper shoulder.

1. **Condition your cat to the sound of a treat cup or engage them in clicker training.** Link leash and harness training with food and fun every step of the way.

2. **Condition your cat to a comfortable, well-fit harness.** Ensure a proper fit, lest your cat slip out. Initially, place the harness on before feeding, when engaging in high-stakes predatory play, or during lesson time.

3. **Using a very light-weight freedom line,** let your cat drag the leash behind them during play and feeding indoors. Gradually pick up the leash and follow them along as you play Find It on a bath or foraging mat or reward them with a catnip toy.

4. **Most cats are cautious when they venture outside.** When exploring with yours, follow their pace, walking behind or alongside them as they’re comfortable. Leave the door open initially should they want to make a quick return. Remember, your home is their den and safe space.

5. **Walking a cat is nothing like walking a dog.** Cats don’t prefer linear street walks and are most comfortable exploring about. Never leave your cat outside alone.