

LUCY'S LUXURIES

Safety, Function, and Fashion – tips to remember when purchasing a small pet carrier

A small pet carrier is much more than just a great looking bag. Always remember that safety and function play key roles when purchasing a style that makes sense for your needs. Here are 6 easy tips to help guide you through your buying process.

Tip 1 – Function

Before purchasing a carrier, think about how you are going to be using your bag: running daily errands; enjoying an outside lunch; or traveling. Each purpose lends itself to a specific style bag to accommodate both your and your pet's needs. Remember to factor in your own body shape/build and how much weight you can comfortably lift and carry.

Tip 2 – Safety Features

It is a must that all carrier styles have a leash/harness strap. ALWAYS securely fasten your pet whenever using an open style bag/tote/sling or a roll down window. It is very important that you also measure the length of the leash/harness ring. If it is not adjustable, make sure that your pet's head cannot go beyond the opening of the window. If the leash/harness ring is too long, your dog may be able to fall out and be seriously injured. Be sure to check how the bag actually fastens shut. Pets can often push magnets and Velcro closures open allowing them to easily exit the carrier. Zippers should close completely. Check for quality hardware throughout the carrier and especially on straps. Plastic or metal feet should be used on the bottom of the bag to prevent it from damage.

Tip 3 – Ventilation

Determine whether your closed style carrier can truly hold its shape without any support in order to provide your pet proper ventilation. Remove any paper or plastic stuffing and inspect the sides and top of the bag. Note the area around the side windows and the top of the carrier. Both will tell you whether the bag is going to physically rest on top of your pet or actually leave space between your pet and the bag for air flow.

This issue is of great importance when the carrier must be completely closed for long periods of time such as travel or inside dinging. Size also plays an important role in proper ventilation. There should be enough space around your pet for air flow. In order to determine the correct size of the carrier be sure to read all of the bag measurements and physically measure your pet. A good standard rule is to be certain that he or she has enough room to completely turn around but without too much extra space to bounce from side to side when carried. Also remember when traveling during the summer months or in warmer climates to always have water available. It is a good idea to freeze a water bottle before departure and to place it under the pet's cushion or in an adjacent pocket to help them stay cool.

Tip 4 – Lining

Look for materials that are absorbent. Many synthetic or vinyl like fabrics do not let in moisture, which means that your pet will have nothing to absorb perspiration. This often causes your pet to be damp or wet and smell when you remove him or her from the carrier. Look for micro-suede or similar fabrics.

Tip 5 – Pocket Space

Pockets are both a convenience and a safety precaution. Today, many pet owners prefer to take one bag vs. a carrier and a handbag. Make sure that your carrier has pockets to store your personal items, as well as a leash and treats. These pockets should be outside of the pet's sitting area to prevent your animal from being crowded, tangled or cut by sharp objects such as your keys.

Tip 6 – Cushion Covers

Check the cushion inside the bag to ensure that its cover is removable and washable. If you are training a new puppy, this will allow you to slide a towel or training pad between the cover and the actual cushion to prevent it from getting ruined.

There are multiple style carriers that will make sense depending on your activities. **These six very simple tips will enable you to quickly narrow your selection and make the best choice for both you and your pet.** Please remember to always keep your pet's safety and comfort in mind!

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Lucy's Luxuries, couture pet carriers and accessories

April 2010