

# Cat Size-0-Meter



Size-0-Meter Score:

Characteristics:

## 1 Very Thin

More than 20% below ideal body weight



- Ribs, spine and hip bones are very easily seen (in short haired pets)
- Pronounced waist
- Obvious loss of muscle mass with no belly fat

## 2 Thin

Between 10-20% below ideal body weight



- Ribs, spine and hip bones easily seen
- Obvious waist
- Very little belly fat



## 3 Ideal



- Ribs, spine and hip bones easily felt
- Visible waist
- A small amount of belly fat

## 4 Overweight

10-15% above ideal body weight



- Ribs, spine and hip bones are hard to feel
- No defined waist
- Slightly sagging belly

## 5 Obese

More than 15% above ideal body weight



- Ribs, spine and hip bones extremely difficult to feel under a padding of fat
- No waist can be seen
- Heavy fat pads on lower back and an obvious sagging belly – skin rolls may sway from side to side when walking

- Your pet is a healthy weight
- Seek advice about your pet's weight
- Seek advice as your pet could be at risk

### Please note

There are some cases where the natural shape of a cat may mean this simple system doesn't translate as easily. For example, if your cat has a long coat it may be difficult to judge the shape. There are also some breeds of cats, such as Maine Coon, that are generally larger than the average moggie – however they should still have the same body shape. If you need help using the tool, download a hard copy version and take it to your local vet or pet care professional for advice.

Derived from BCSC validated by: Laflamme DP. Development and validation of a body condition score system for cats. A clinical tool Feline Practice. 1997, 25:13-17  
Laflamme DP, Hume E, Harrison J. Evaluation of zoonotic measures as an assessment of body composition of dogs and cats. Compendium 2001;23(Suppl 9A):88





### Check out our top 5 tips for feeding your cat.

- 1 Clean, fresh water should always be available in a bowl, be kept away from the litter tray area and should always be filled to the brim (cats often don't like their whiskers touching the edge of a bowl when they drink).
- 2 Read the feeding guidelines on the pet food packet. Use these as a starting point but you may need to adapt the amount fed depending on your cat's age and how active he/she is.
- 3 Monitor your cat's weight and body condition regularly – use our Cat Size-0-Meter to check your pet's size and shape. When you are happy with their body condition, then note their weight.
- 4 Be careful when feeding treats; these are extra calories that need to be taken in to consideration at mealtimes.
- 5 Treating with human foods should be avoided – they are often too high in calories for pets. Did you know that a small chunk of cheese for a cat has similar calorie level as 9 chunks of cheese for a person?

Remember to make the most of advice on weight management offered by many vet practices and pet care professionals.



# Cat Size-0-Meter

Results:

Your Cat is score  
Very Thin 1

Your pet is very likely to be underweight. Your pet may have a naturally lean physique but we recommend you speak to your local vet to rule out any underlying medical reasons such as an overactive thyroid gland. If your pet is healthy but otherwise underweight, your vet is likely to advise some dietary and lifestyle changes.

Your Cat is score  
Thin 2

Your pet is thin and potentially underweight. Your pet may have a naturally lean physique but we recommend you speak to your local vet for a health check up. If your pet is healthy but otherwise underweight, your vet may advise some dietary and lifestyle changes.

Your Cat is score  
Ideal 3

Congratulations your pet is in ideal body condition! This is great news, as being its ideal weight increases the chances of your cat living a long and healthy life. To keep your cat in perfect shape, monitor its weight and body condition on a regular basis (eg. once a month) and be careful what you and everyone else in the family feeds it. Remember any changes in lifestyle (eg. reduced exercise, recent surgery, extra treats, or even factors such as stress) can result in weight change.

Your Cat is score  
Overweight 4

Your pet is potentially overweight. Being overweight is unhealthy for pets as it can lead to a shortened life-span, heart disease, arthritis and diabetes. Speak to your local vet for advice and a thorough health check-up. The vet will look for any underlying medical reasons as to why your pet may be too heavy. If there are no underlying health issues, a change of diet and lifestyle is likely to be suggested. Many vet practices run free weight management consultations, ask about these services when you ring to book an appointment.

Your Cat is score  
Obese 5

Your pet is likely to be obese and this can have serious medical implications. Being overweight is unhealthy for pets as it can lead to a shortened life-span, heart disease, arthritis and diabetes. Speak to your local vet for advice and a thorough health check-up. The vet will look for any underlying medical reasons as to why your pet may be too heavy. If there are no underlying health issues, a weight loss programme will probably be individually developed for your pet and should include diet and lifestyle changes.

For more information on the Cat Size-0-Meter and tips on how to prevent weight gain visit [www.pfma.org.uk](http://www.pfma.org.uk). In addition to providing useful tips on how to keep your pet healthy and happy, a team of veterinary nutrition experts are on hand to answer your pet nutrition questions in the 'Ask the Expert' section.