



WHAT CATS WANT US TO KNOW ABOUT CATS

(AS TAUGHT TO US BY OUR 1001 FOSTER CATS AND KITTENS)

SOUTHERN COUNTIES RESCUE ADOPTION PACKAGE



Southern Counties Rescue - Cats & Kittens
Serving Orange, Imperial & San Diego Counties

www.southerncountiesrescue.org



The kitty(s) you are adopting is fostered by: _____

Telephone #: _____ Email: _____

PLEASE CALL THE FOSTER WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT FOOD, KITTY BEHAVIOR, ETC. YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT ONE OF THE VOLUNTEERS

SEND PHOTOS, WE LOVE TO SEE OUR FOSTERS IN THEIR FOREVER HOMES!

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If questions or you cannot keep kitty for ANY reason contact one of us listed above.

**View our website at: <http://www.southerncountiesrescue.org>
to see our kitties available for adoption
and other useful information under RESOURCES, such as How to Pill a Cat...**

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Serving Orange, Imperial & San Diego Counties
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**Visit us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCountiesRescue>
Washington Chapter - <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCountiesRescueNWC>**

Follow us on Instagram - /sountiesrescue

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This manual is a compilation of years of doing cat rescue and a lot of reading about cats on the internet. Much of it I compiled from the knowledge of my fellow rescue enthusiasts in Kitten Rescue, Los Angeles while I was active with them for over 11 years prior to forming Southern Counties Rescue in December, 2011.

When you place a cat or kitten into a new home you want it to have every chance of succeeding so you write handouts for the new adopter telling them what to expect in the first week, how to introduce their new cat or kitten to their children, what to feed and on and on. Soon you have a book of knowledge about cats and kittens.

I am also grateful for the wonderful vets who share their extensive knowledge on the internet just to make life better and healthier for cats. And my own personal vets who will answer question after question for me, all to help the kitties.

I want to thank Catnip Newsletter created by Tufts University, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine for writing and publishing such easy to read but thorough articles on all issues important to cats. They accept no advertisements from companies who make cat products so they have no conflict of interest when they rate food, litter, toys and other cat products. It's like a Consumer Guide for cats. They also share the latest information on cat health problems and solutions, good topics to discuss with your vet. If you only subscribe to one cat publication I highly recommend Catnip. Go to this website, <http://www.tuftscatnip.com/> to subscribe.

I have personally placed over 1000 cats and kittens into new homes and have been involved with the rescue of over 3600 cats and kittens. Before I started in Rescue I thought I knew cats, after all I was a cat owner for 15 years but I realized I didn't know cats at all.

From everyone of these critters I have learned something, no two are alike. They all have their own personality and they may or may not adjust to their new home the same way. With rescue kitties patience is a must.

A very sincere thank you goes out to my fellow volunteers who have suffered with sick kitties and dying kitties, huge vet bills, unpaid personal bills, all to help these kitties find a forever home.

And last but not least a very big THANK YOU to everyone who adopts from Southern Counties Rescue giving one more kitty a forever home.



Phyllis Elijah, President
Southern Counties Rescue
Saving Cats and Kittens One at a Time.

INTRODUCING NEW KITTY TO YOUR HOME

What to Expect of Your New Pet in the Next Week

The first 24-48 hours your new cat spends in your home are very crucial. Please follow these guidelines to reduce the change of adjustment problems. Please remember you are placing your pet in new surroundings with unfamiliar sights and smells. Different furniture and eating places will add to its confusion. Your cat may be disoriented, frightened by sudden movements, loud noises, and even the threat of another animal. If you have other pets this is especially important.

ISOLATION

DO NOT PUT COLLARS ON KITTENS UNDER 5 LBS!

We strongly recommend isolating a new cat in a room with minimal hiding places (such as a bathroom) for the first 1-2 days. Provide the cat with its very own toys, bed, litterbox and bowls of food and water in that room (bathrooms are ideal because there are no hiding places you can't reach). One more suggestion—put clothing that has been worn by the family members in there with the kitty—get them use to the smells.

HEALTH WATCH

Vomiting, diarrhea and eye/nose discharge can occur during a cat's transition to a new home due to the stress of a change in environment and/or change in diet. If these symptoms persist beyond 48 hours, however, please contact us or a veterinarian.

WARNING SIGNS

- Blood in the stool
- Excessive diarrhea
- Excessive nose discharge and sneezing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive vomiting

SPEAK SOFTLY... MOVE SLOWLY... STROKE GENTLY!

- Visiting the cat often will help him/her bond to you without being overwhelmed by a new environment right away. Introduce family members and friends slowly and one-at-a-time. Your cat will not hate you and is not being deprived by being closed in a single room. It's vital that you give your new family member some time in an enclosed area to develop a sense of security and to appreciate you. You're the best thing that happens in your cat's day—don't feel guilty! After the isolation period allow the cat access to more and more of your home. Hiding, skittishness and meowing is normal during the adjustment period. It usually takes a few weeks or more for a cat to feel settled in a new home.

Animals respond to threatening situations by “shutting down” for a period of time. It may not eat, miss the litterbox, or even have diarrhea. Let your new cat or kitten sleep a lot. However, if this behavior continues for more than a few days, call the foster parent from whom you adopted.

Feed her/him familiar food in frequent, small doses. This teaches the pet that you'll love and care for it. Only feed a high quality food. REASSURE! While feeding your cat, talk softly and gently—repeating the pet's new name. If the cat is comfortable with it, try soft stroking or scratching on the back of the neck.

When you think your pet is ready, for instance it tries to follow you out the door (not to get away but to be with you). Then allow it to explore new surroundings by opening the door and allowing it to investigate nearby rooms. The original room will be his/her source of safety and comfort so keep it accessible.

It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to introduce other pets gradually. **Read the article, *Introducing Your New Cat to Your Pets*.** Your new cat should NOT interact with your existing pets for at least 24 hours or longer.

If your cat is shy, it may be because of former neglect or abuse. They need time to learn who you are and what sounds and smells are normal in your house. Sounds you take for granted such as key chains, your neighbor's dog barking, the flushing of a toilet, your children watching TV, or sirens on a nearby street will take time for him/her to adjust to. It takes 3 to 6 months for a cat to *really* settle in.

Please be patient... the love you will receive is a wonderful reward!

INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO NEW KITTY

Children are extremely excited with a new cat or kittens join the family. Please follow these guidelines to insure a happy transition. Explain to your children that everything is new and confusing to your new pet.

ONE AT A TIME

Your new kitty is in isolation and scared due to all of the new surrounding and loss of familiar ones including sometimes siblings and cat buddies. If you have multiple children have them go into the isolation room ONE at a time.

For at least the first few visits, a parent should be present to help the child learn how to handle the cat/kitten and to read the cat's communication signs. This also allows the child his/her own time to bond with the kitty without siblings struggling over the kitties. This is especially important for the younger sibling(s).

SHORT VISITS

Keep the visits short, no more than 10-15 minutes at a time. This prevents the cat/kittens from getting stressed as a result of too much attention while they are adjusting. It also keeps the other children from getting too impatient for their turn.

SPEAK SOFTLY... MOVE SLOWLY... STROKE GENTLY!

- Sit on the floor, use a toy such as a string or wand/pole type cat toy to entice the kitty to come to you.
- Do NOT allow the child to grab the cat/kitten and pull it out from it's "safe place".
- Coach it out by gently tossing toys or providing treats, even tossing dry kibble cat food.

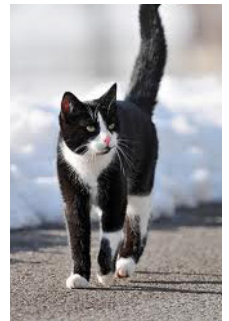
Remember the kitten/cat is going through it's adjustment period so it may have less energy so don't force it to play madly, slow movements with the cat wand is best at first.

Pick cat up gently once it's use to you. Always support it's bottom feet. If it starts to struggle, let it go.

TEACH CAT SIGNS

All cats communicate with what we call "cat signs": tail movements, ear movements, vocally... Teach these basic ones to your children and teach them to respond appropriately.

- **Tail straight up in air** – happy , confident cat, a greeting. OK to play with and approach.
- **Tail down moving side-to-side, a switching movement** – leave me alone! Cat does NOT want to be bothered, getting irritated at actions of others (could be other cats, people or surroundings). Children might confuse this with a dog's wagging tail.
- **Tail arched and puffed out** – cat is scared and is ready to attack or defend itself. Leave cat alone, do not try to pick up, it will bite.
- **Tail held low and tucked between hind legs** – cat is showing submission or defeat.
- **Ears up and alert** – interested in surroundings, toy, etc. OK to approach and interact with cat.
- **Ears twitching nervously** – cat is agitated and nervous. Speak softly and calmly, approach slowly.
- **Ears flat against head** – definitely scared or angry, a defensive position. Leave cat alone. Do NOT try to coach out of being angry, this is when people get bit.
- **Ears back** – again this is an aggressive position and may attack. DO NOT approach and try to handle.
- **Fur on back bristling** – definitely frightened and on defensive, cat may attach. DO NOT approach.
- **Eyes–pupils–greatly enlarged** – cat excited, angered or scared. Leave cat in peace, let him relax.



There are a lot more cat communications with tails, ears, fur, eyes and vocally.

Check the internet for more websites and articles on cat communication.

FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS FROM RESCUE

We are often asked, “what is the best brand of food to feed?” There isn’t one “best brand”, what is important is to **READ THE INGREDIENTS**. Forget about percentages of protein...cats digestive systems are different from ours, they need MEAT not GRAIN.

1. Know What You’re Feeding. I will repeat again, **read the ingredients**. Cats are obligate carnivores and their bodies are designed to metabolize meat. Many foods, particularly dry foods, are loaded with grains that cats are not able to metabolize and therefore have limited nutritional value. Don’t judge a food just by the protein content listed on the label; there is a major difference between a food that has 30% protein derived largely from corn (the worst of the grains for cats) and a food whose protein content is entirely or primarily from meat. Also, many cats can develop digestive and allergic conditions from eating a grain heavy diet. If cost is an issue, consider store brands Petco, Petsmart, Trader Joes, Tractor Store, Chewy all have them.

THE FIRST INGREDIENT NEEDS TO BE A MEAT PROTEIN, avoid MEAT BY PRODUCTS these are meats that they don’t want to identify by name like horse, or dogs and cats that have been euthanized. Chicken by products are feet, feathers, beaks...

2. Wet vs. Dry. Although dry food is certainly more convenient, **wet food is much better for cats**. Wet food is easier to digest and has a much higher water content (cats are better off when they get their necessary water intake from food, as they do in the wild, rather than from drinking). Dry food, in contrast, absorbs water as it passes through the cat’s system, which over the long term can lead to premature kidney failure. Dry foods are also more likely to cause obesity, which can lead to other health problems, including feline diabetes. Many people have heard that dry food is better for a cat’s teeth – studies have shown this is NOT TRUE. In fact, the opposite is true: dry food often has a flavor sprayed on the kibble and can come off, stick to the cats teeth and cause dental disease. Remember nutrition is NOT COVERED IN VET SCHOOL, so NOT ALL VETS ARE EXPERTS on food.

3. Cheap isn’t better. Cheaper cat foods may save you money day to day, but in the long-term may cost you more in vet bills.

4. Do some research. Unhealthy pet foods are marketed as relentlessly as unhealthy food for people (think Coke). Fortunately, there are many good articles on the Internet about feline nutrition, look for ones without pet food sponsors.

5. Consider a raw diet Some vets now recommend a raw diet. We have found they can cure some issues, especially if cat has intestine issues such as diarrhea or IBD. There are several commercial raw diets that are excellent plus FaceBook pages dedicated to feeding raw. It is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT IT BE A BALANCED RAW DIET**.

The following **list of recommended foods** is based on all of these factors. This list is not complete, new companies and labels come into existence all the time, so your best guide is to **READ THE INGREDIENTS!**

Brands we are feeding (circled)

Brands we are feeding (circled)

American Journey (Chewy)....Canned	Dry	Merrick.....Canned	Dry
Avo Derm.....Canned	Dry	Natural Balance.....Canned	Dry
Almo Nature.....Canned	Dry	Nutro _____.....Canned	Dry
California Natural.....Canned	Dry	Natures Variety - Instinct.....Canned	Dry
Costco.....Canned	Dry	NuloCanned	Dry
Earthborn.....Canned	Dry	Purina One/Pro Plan.....Canned	Dry
Friskies*Canned	Dry	Science DietCanned	Dry
Fancy Feast*Canned	Dry	Wellness.....Canned	Dry
Halo.....Canned	Dry	WeruvaCanned	Dry
IAMS.....Canned	Dry	Whole Earth (Merrick)Canned	Dry
Innova.....Canned	Dry	Whole Hearted (Petco)Canned	Dry
_____.....Canned	Dry		

Other Brand or flavor of above food: _____

And remember: always have plenty of fresh water for your cat, change it at least once a day.

We recommend wet food twice a day, usually around 2 oz can per cat per meal, and leaving a bowl of dry food out unless your cat is fat or has urinary tract problems, then limit the amount of dry food. Honestly dry food has no benefit to cats, only to humans for convenience.

**Note: Sometimes we feed lesser quality food due to cost of fostering, please transition your cats to above guidelines.*

Friskies is not recommended due to containing meat-by-products, nor is most Fancy Feast flavors.

SHOPPING LIST

You must have the following items when you bring your cat home:

- Cat Carrier (top loaders are easier to load, be sure big enough and sturdy for cat.)
- Good Quality Wet Food (Should be marked on Food Recommendations page, if not ask foster)
- Good Quality Dry Food (Should be marked on Food Recommendations page, if not ask foster)
- Cardboard Scratcher for “introduction to your home” room
- Litter Box & Scoop
- Litter

If you don't have these at home, buy these too:

- Metal or ceramic bowl for water
- Metal or ceramic dish for dry food (DO NOT use plastic feeder)
- Small dish for wet food
- Cat bed—this can be a towel folded on floor
- Toy—home made is fine

Within the first week be sure you have:

- Nail Trimmers or Clippers (some vets use human ones)
- Brush or grooming comb or both
- Sturdy scratching posts, more the merrier to prevent scratching on furniture

Not essential but cats love:

- Kitty grass, or any organic grass for them to eat
- Cat bed
- Toys
- Lounge Cat Scratcher out of cardboard



True Luxuries to spoil your cat:

- Window perch
- Bird feeder or fountain outside to attract visitors (cat TV)
- Enclosed outside area or outdoor cat proof fencing.
- Extra large cat tree or wall mounted cat ramps & perches
- Heated cat bed by K&H, or one of their pads to put into another cat bed.
- Interactive toys, like Peek & Play, Round Cat Scratcher, Da Bird.



CAT PROOFING YOUR HOME

By now you have bought the essentials from our shopping list & recommendations. You've also decided which room will be kitty's "safe room" to start out in your home. There's only one step left before letting your cat or kitten have the run of your home— Cat-proofing your home to save wear and tear on the household as well as the new arrival. Please remember just because your last cat didn't get into trouble this doesn't mean your new kitten or young cat won't.

The following steps will help create a safe environment for your new family member. Remember, kittens are much more active and inquisitive than adult cats, so these steps are extremely important if you are adopting kittens or teenagers.

The Cat-Proofing Process

Get Down Low

Put on some old clothes and get down on the floor at a cat's level. You'll spot tempting hazards you may never have noticed from your human point of view.

Breakables

Put away any breakable treasures that are remotely accessible to your cat. Remember that adult cats can, and will, jump onto shelves and counters, so put yourself into the mind of the cat, and look around, and remove anything you value. Cats will want to get into absolutely everything, some are even adept at opening cupboards and doors, especially french door handles.

Other Destroyables

Kittens like to climb on furniture and drapes. Consider covering cloth furniture with some kind of cover, or even with a blanket or bedspread. Drapes should be confined to off-limit rooms, or at the least, tied up and out of reach for the time being. Trimming nails will help protect your furniture.

Poisonous Plants

Kittens and adult cats love to play with plants. Unfortunately, part of their play involves biting and tasting. Many types of common household plants are poisonous to cats, so you will either need to get rid of those, or hang them safely out of reach. A list of plants poisonous to cats is listed towards the end of this adoption package. Remember flower arrangements can be just as deadly as house plants.

Windows

Cats and kittens love to sit and look out windows watching birds, insects and other activity, they will do it for hours. Check to be sure all screens are securely attached if you open the window and doors.

Some cats have been known to tear holes in screens and escape so be sure your screens are strong and if in doubt, rescreen any open window or door screens with pet-proof screening material available at most hardware stores and screen shops.



Hanging Blinds Cords

Kittens, and many cats will love to bat around cords from hanging blinds, but they can also get tangled up in them with disastrous consequences. Either anchor the cords firmly or tie them up out of reach. Better yet get cordless blinds, these are the safest for cats and children.

Electrical and phone cords

Kittens' insatiable curiosity often leads them to one of the most dangerously tempting objects in the house: electric cords. Computers with their numerous tempting cords are a particular hazard. Invest in a cord management system or tape the cords together and fasten them out of reach. Those that don't manage easily can be sprayed with Bitter Apple, a very unpleasant tasting, but harmless substance. Do the same with long phone cords. Also be aware of dangling iron cords—they look like fun for a kitten to play with, until a hot iron comes crashing down.

Pest Poisons

Remove any ant or roach traps from accessible areas. These small plastic traps resemble cat toys and will be very tempting for kitty to bat around but they are poisonous.

Hot Liquids

Remember the curiosity of kittens and young cats, do not leave hot liquids in a cup or tall container unattended. In less than a second they can stick their paws into it or knock it over onto themselves.

Small Hazards

Rubber bands, paper clips, thumb tacks, broken balloons, Christmas tree tinsel and other small articles are irresistible play objects for kittens, but pose a choking hazard. Put them away in containers, and leave the tinsel off the tree this year. A good rule of thumb is to put away anything that you would not want a toddler to get his hands on--the same reasoning goes for your kitten or cat.



Appliances

Cats and kittens love to climb into everything—including dishwashers and front loading washers and dryers. Look carefully before you start the machine to be sure you have no “extra” items. I once almost “dried” my cat, she hopped in while my back was turned, thank goodness I looked!

The Garage

It's probably better to label the garage “off-limits” to your cat. Too many poisonous/hazardous materials are stored there. Anti-freeze is particularly poisonous and is attractive to animals because of its sweet taste. Make sure that any spilled anti-freeze is cleaned up immediately, and the garage floor thoroughly washed. Store all caustic and poisonous materials in a closed cabinet.

This is far from an exhaustive list of cat-proofing ideas. No home can be completely free of all hazards, but if you go from room to room and use common sense, you should be able to minimize the risks to your new kitty.

INTRODUCING YOUR NEW CAT TO YOUR PETS

If your new cat is going to be a companion to your existing cat(s) or dog(s), you should expect it to take some time before they are used to each other. It can be a matter of days, weeks or even months, depending on the personalities of the animals involved. While there is no foolproof way to make animals become friends, we advise that you play it safe and introduce the new kitty to your house slowly in order to prevent fearful and aggressive problems from developing. Here are some suggestions on how best to introduce your new kitty to your pets.

Introducing a New Cat to Other Cats

You'll want to avoid any interactions between the cats that result in either fearful or aggressive behavior. If these responses are allowed to become habit, they can be difficult to change. It's better to introduce the animals to each other so gradually that neither cat becomes afraid or aggressive.

Upon coming home, the new cat should be isolated from the other cats in the house. The first step to integrating the cats is to get them used to each other's scent while avoiding eye contact.

- You can put the new cat's carrier (empty, door open) in the room with your existing cats and let them discover it on their own.
- Another tip is to put something on either side of a closed door that will attract the cats, such as food or a catnip toy. This will help start things out right by associating something enjoyable with each other's presence.
- You may also introduce scent by switching sleeping blankets between the new cat and the resident cats, or by putting the other cat's blanket underneath the food dishes.

Once the new cat is using its box and eating regularly while confined, let it have free time in the house while confining the other cats. This switch provides another way for the cats to experience each other's scent without a face-to-face meeting. It also allows the newcomer to become familiar with its new surroundings without being frightened by other animals.

The next step is to allow your cats to see each other without full body contact. Try setting up a baby gate or other barrier in a doorway between the cats, or firmly prop the door open a couple inches with doorstops (taking care that neither cat can fit its head through the opening and that the door is secure and won't slam shut). You'll want to supervise this at first until the cats are relatively calm in each other's presence, with a minimum of hissing, posturing and growling.

Once they are ready, you can let the cats meet each other. Take your existing cats into a different part of your home, and then leave the door open to the newcomer's room. Let the newcomer explore and encounter your existing cat on his own terms. You should expect some hissing, spitting and growling. Be prepared with a glass of water. If a fight breaks out, do NOT interfere directly. Instead, throw water on the cats, clap your hands and shout, bang a pot with a spoon or throw a blanket over each cat separately, wrapping the blanket around the cat before picking him up. Separate the cats until they have calmed down. It may be best to leave the cats separated when you are not home until you are sure they are getting along well. To be safe, you should trim their nails prior to the first face-to-face encounter.



Even after you have allowed them to meet, you should continue to feed them separately and maintain separate litter boxes until they are comfortable sharing space together. Successful introductions require time and patience. Don't expect things to be perfect overnight. Based on our years of introducing cats if you take it slowly, rarely is there a fight. After a few weeks they should start to be friends.

Introducing a New Cat to a Resident Dog

Do NOT assume that your dog will like your new cat just because he loved your old cat. This is a different animal to him and they have to get to know each other.



Dogs and cats that have not experienced each other will require some extra time to become accustomed to each other. Dogs usually want to chase and play with cats, and cats are usually afraid and defensive. You can use any of the techniques described in “Introducing a new cat to other cats.” In addition: If your dog does not already know the commands “sit,” “down,” “come,” and “stay,” you should begin working on them. Little tidbits of food increase your dog’s motivation to perform, which will be necessary in the presence of such a strong distraction as a new cat. Even if your dog already knows the commands, work with obeying commands in return for a tidbit.

After the animals have become comfortable eating on either side of the door, and have been exposed to each other’s scents as described in the previous section, you can attempt a face-to-face. Put your dog’s leash on, and command him to either “sit” or “down” and “stay,” using food tidbits. Have another family member enter the room and quietly sit down with the cat on his or her lap. The cat should also be offered some special tidbits.

- At first, the cat and dog should be on OPPOSITE sides of the room. Repeat this step several times until both the cat and dog are tolerating each other without fear, aggression, or other uncontrollable behavior.
- Next, move the animals a little closer together, with the dog still on a leash and the cat gently held in a lap. If the cat does not like to be held, you can use a wire crate or carrier instead. If the dog gets up from its “stay” position, it should be firmly repositioned, and praised and rewarded for obeying the “stay” command. If the cat becomes frightened, increase the distance between the animals and progress more slowly. Eventually, the animals should be brought close enough together to allow them to investigate each other.

Although your dog must be taught that chasing or being rough with the cat is unacceptable behavior, your dog must also be taught how to behave appropriately, and be rewarded for doing so (e.g. sitting, coming when called, or lying down in return for a tidbit). If your dog is always punished whenever the cat is around, and never has “good things” happen in the cat’s presence, your dog may redirect aggression toward the cat.

You may want to keep your dog on a leash and with you when the cat is free in the house during the introduction process. Be sure that your cat has an escape route, and a place to hide. Keep the dog and cat separated when you aren’t home until you are certain they will both be safe.



Eventually we hope all of your pets will become good friends.

Precautions: Dogs like to eat cat food because it is very high in protein, and therefore very tasty. Keep cat food out of the dog’s reach (in a closet, on a high shelf, etc.). Some dogs like to eat cat feces; although there are no health hazards to the dog from this habit, it is usually distasteful to the owners, especially if the dog kisses them in the face afterwards. The best solution to this is to place the litter box where the dog cannot access it such as behind a baby gate or in a closet with the door anchored open (from both sides) just wide enough for the cat. Another solution is a litter box furniture cover that the dog can’t get his head into; see examples on the litter box page. Companies also make furniture specifically for feeding cats that dogs can’t get into. Do a search on the internet and be sure the entry hole is big enough if you have a big cat. Always feed your dog **alone**. **Cats should not eat dog food as it may cause dietary deficiencies.**

CATS NEED WET FOOD

By Beth Taylor and Steve Brown

The natural diet of cats is meat.

Cats are meat eaters, designed to thrive on a wide variety of small prey animals, eaten fresh and whole. Their natural diet is high in water and protein, with a moderate amount of fat, and a very low percentage of carbohydrate.

Dry cat food is high in grain.

A diet of dry food is high in carbohydrate, between 35 and 50 percent. "Diet" and "Lite" foods have even more.

Dry food contains almost no water. Dry cat food is convenient to feed, and relatively inexpensive, but it's the opposite of the natural diet of cats. Cats have no dietary need for any carbohydrate.

Cats need to get water from their food.

Cats are descended from feline desert dwellers. They couldn't stroll over to the watering hole for a drink, and cat tongues are not very well designed for drinking water.

Cats are adapted to obtain most of their water from their prey, which contains more than 75 percent water. Cats who eat dry food consume only half the water they need, compared to those that eat wet food, and live in a state of chronic dehydration.

The common health problems of cats are related to diet.

There is increasing evidence, published in peer-reviewed veterinary journals, that many of the health problems seen in cats are the result of diets inappropriate for a feline. Dry, grain-based foods fed to a meat eater, over time, result in both chronic and life-threatening diseases, like these:

Obesity: Since cats are designed for a high-protein, moderate-fat, low-carbohydrate diet, it is not surprising that obesity is often seen in cats. Diet cat foods have even more carbohydrate than regular ones, and less fat, so they depart even further from the natural diet of cats, making it harder for them to lose weight.

Diabetes: The high level of carbohydrate in dry cat food contributes directly to the development of diabetes in cats. Blood sugar levels rise when cats eat dry food. When this is an ongoing event, insulin-producing cells "downregulate," which leads to diabetes.

Kidney Disease: Kidney disease is the most common cause of death for cats. The kidneys require an abundant supply of water to do their job. Without water to process the by-products of the digestion process, the kidneys are overloaded, become damaged over time and unable to do their job.

Bladder Problems: Cystitis, bladder irritation and bladder/kidney stone formation are also strongly connected to dehydration. If the body is well hydrated, these problems are minimized.

Inflammatory Bowel Syndrome and Disease: These problems are often characterized by vomiting and diarrhea and are very common in cats. Cats who eat a species-appropriate diet rarely suffer from these issues.

Dental disease: Dry food has a high sugar (carbohydrate) content, which has been shown to cause dental decay.

For cats to derive any supposed abrasive benefit from dry foods to be seen, they would have to actually chew their dry food. Since dry food shatters in their mouths and they then swallow the pieces, there's no abrasive action from chewing something hard.



Cats who eat dry food often have very severe dental problems. Many factors contribute to dental health, but it is clear that a high-carbohydrate diet is not beneficial!

The Solution: An Appropriate Diet for the Species

It's simple: Cats need to eat a diet that is high in protein and water, with a moderate amount of fat, and almost no carbohydrate.

Most of the health problems we've discussed here are either radically improved or eliminated by eating a diet that meets the needs of a carnivore -- one which closely resembles the nutritional balance provided by a mouse. For example, many veterinarians now treat diabetes in cats with a meat-based canned diet.

We'd like to go a step further, and prevent these diseases.

Feed your cat a meat-based diet!

We suggest you buy canned food that is designed to be complete, or complete frozen diets that have very little vegetable content. No grain sources should be listed in the ingredient panel. There are grain-free canned cat foods that have some vegetables in them, but vegetables should not be a major component (read our article on how to compute these percentages, at this web address: <http://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2010/01/06/whats-the-best-food-for-your-pet.aspx>).

"All meat" diets are just that, and they will not meet your cat's nutritional needs alone. [unless balanced raw]

Make the switch successful!

It sounds simple to just switch your cat's food. After all, meat tastes better than dry food, but your cat may disagree. Dry foods are designed to be tasty, and many cats are addicted to them. Often, cats are not open to the idea of variety, especially if they have only been fed one food (as we have been advised by pet food companies for decades). Creativity and patience may be needed to switch your cat.

Cats will starve themselves, and they are not good candidates for the tough love approach. Some very serious conditions can occur if cats do not eat for an extended period, especially if they are overweight. A slow switch will prevent problems.

Here are some ideas to help you along:

Establish regular feeding times and put food away in between meals. For many reasons, it's best for their bodies not to have food available all the time. If you have dogs, you know what to do with leftovers! Feed multiple cats separately.

Consider dry food to be a snack only, not left out all the time. Leave out just a few pieces as a treat. Consider this the equivalent of "kitty junk food."

Offer bits of other kinds of fresh food that you are eating. They may be refused, but one day, they won't. Your goal is to get your cat to consider things as food other than dry, crunchy items.

Cat whiskers are very sensitive. If food is served in a bowl that interferes with whiskers, it could be enough to keep the cat from considering the food. A flat dish works well.

Cats generally prefer their food between room temperature and body temperature. The dry food cats are used to eating is designed to be very smelly. Warming the food releases the flavors and fragrances. Cats choose food by smell, and wet food is a lot less fragrant than a commercial food they have been eating. This is often the reason that the second half of a can of food is refused: The first time it was room temperature!

Trickery has been known to work with cats. Put the food on your plate, or hide it in a location cats know to be forbidden. When in doubt, creativity helps!

Additions and Considerations

Add sardines for good fats, or use fish oil. A meal of sardines once a week or one small sardine a day adds omega-3 fatty acids in their best form -- whole food. Because cats can't use plant sources of omega-3s at all, animal sources are necessary. If sardines aren't appealing to you, use a fresh, high-quality omega-3 fish oil supplemented with vitamin E.

Digestive enzymes and a glandular supplement are good additions to replace the parts of prey animals we normally don't feed cats: The stomach contents and smaller glands.

We think that the **optimum diet for cats is a raw meat-based diet**. However it must be balanced.[See FB page Raw Feeding Advice and Support.]

If you feed your cat a canned diet that approximates the balance of his or her natural diet, their diet will be fully hydrated, and you will be much closer to providing your cat with optimum nutrition.

If you choose to feed a meat-based canned diet, find a way to simulate components lost in cooking or processing.

One way to add live food is with "cat grass," very popular with cats. It's often available in the produce section at the grocery store, or you can grow your own from a kit. This addition often takes the burden off the house plants! Dry "green stuff" is another choice ("Barley Cat" is one product). It takes a very small quantity of a dry product to do the job. Too much can make urine PH too alkaline, and cause some of the problems you're trying to avoid! Tiny pinches of dry green stuff go a long way. Buy organic seeds on internet and plant in planter.

For cats, good diet can make the difference between "Old Age" at 12 and 23. Cats who eat dry food are often old and feel quite ill at 9 or 10. Healthy cats can live a very long time, and that's what we hope for your feline carnivore! Contact Steve or Beth for more information at bat31@earthlink.net.

Dr. Mercola's Comment:

There is indeed a special relationship that exists between pets and their owners that goes far beyond the sharing of a home together. Our happy-go-lucky, four-legged friends also provide us with constant unconditional love, devotion, friendship and something else that might not be at the forefront of most people's minds -- health benefits.

If you have a dog, I highly recommend you read their excellent book, *See Spot Live Longer*. Using philosophies similar to my own regarding the importance of nutrition, See Spot Live Longer presents solid evidence that a good diet is just as important for dogs as it is for us. When fed a proper raw diet appropriate for their body, hundreds of people, including veterinarians, have witnessed vast health improvements in their dogs.

Authors Steve Brown and Beth Taylor, both pet health and nutrition experts, provide an all-inclusive argument for feeding your dog [or cat] a naturally balanced raw meat, bone and vegetable-based diet that provides much higher quality nutrition than any dry or canned dog or cat food. By covering all the bases, readers will:

- Review case studies of dogs and cats with chronic illness that improved after fed a healthy diet of fresh food.
- Dispel the myths that are sabotaging your [cat] dog's health.
- Learn how the ancestral dog's diet compares to the modern diet dogs eat today.
- Find out why dry and canned [cat] dog foods may be harming your pet.
- Find out what real fresh foods will protect your pet from cancer and other disease.
- Discover the importance of exercise and how keeping your pet fit will add years to its life.
- Learn practical, cost-effective solutions to feeding your dog [or cat] better for a longer and healthier life.

This article is reprinted from Mercola.com, at: http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/Cats_Need_Wet_Food_12085.html.

CATS NEED WATER

Text published in [Eating and Nutrition](#), on web. Photos are of rescued and now adopted cats.

Every life process relies on [water](#). The body of the cat is made up of about 70% water. The natural prey that cats would catch also contain approximately that same amount of water. Many people are under the false assumption that cats don't need water or that they're afraid of it. The cat's ancestors came from a desert environment and relied on getting adequate amounts of water in the food they ate.

Modern day cats eat lots of dry food* which has very low water content (about 10%) and so they need an additional water supply in the form of a separate water bowl. Cats who consume wet food get much of the water they need within that food (canned food contains approximately 78% water) but also still greatly benefit from a separate water supply. A cat eating a diet of canned and dry food also must have a separate water supply.

If you feed dry food to your cat do not try to increase the water content by wetting the food because it often makes it much less palatable to the cat. Instead, consider adding some canned food into the diet. There are ways to gradually transition your cat to canned food. ([See article, Cat's Need Wet Food.](#))

Rescue's Note: Eating ONLY dry food is NOT good for your cat. It fact many vets believe it's the cause of most health problems.

Use the Right Type of Water Bowl

Cats need to have access to fresh water at all

times. To ensure that your cat is drinking enough water, use a water bowl that is an appropriate size for your cat and maintain a consistent level of water in it. Don't use a huge bowl filled with water as a way of only having to fill it once a week because the water will get stale, dirty and contaminated. Use a bowl that will hold a day's water. Every day, wash the bowl with soapy water, thoroughly rinse it and refill with fresh water. Don't just refill the water bowl without washing it because the water will taste bad and can become contaminated.



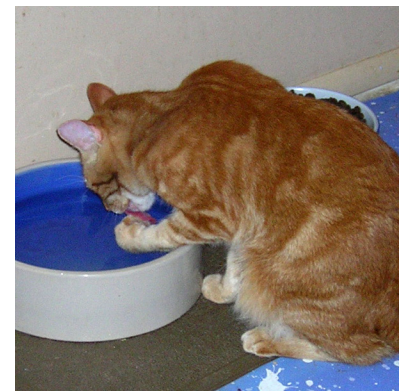
Gravity-feed water* and food bowls* are also very popular with pet parents. The one problem with the water container though is that the water can get stale. If you do decide to use a gravity-feed dispenser, you still need to regularly change the water and completely clean the dispenser and reservoir.

Rescue's Note: We do NOT recommend gravity feeders. Food & water gets stale.

If you aren't sure which type of bowl is best, offer a few different shapes and sizes so your cat will have the choice.

Keep Water Separate From Food

To avoid contamination from food, don't use a double feeder that has food on one side and water on the other. It's too easy for food particles to drop into the water. Additionally, many cats don't like having their food and water close together. Some cats won't drink water if it's too close to their food source.



Monitor Your Cat's Water Intake

Another benefit of filling the water bowl each day is that it enables you to better monitor how much or how little water your cat is drinking. If you notice a sudden increase or decrease, it can indicate a potential health issue. For example, an increase in water consumption may be a sign of renal failure or diabetes. The sooner you're alerted to the change in water intake, the sooner your cat will be diagnosed and receive appropriate veterinary care.

You may also notice a change in the urine output of your cat. Any change in litter box habits or the amount or frequency of your cat's urination could indicate a potential medical problem. Consult your veterinarian if you notice a change. If your cat does get a diagnosis of something such as feline lower urinary tract disease, renal failure or diabetes, she'll need to drink adequate amounts of water to help flush toxins. Since she'll be drinking more water you may have to increase the number of water bowls or refill them more often.

No Milk

Milk is not a replacement for water. If you offer your cat milk instead of water she will become dehydrated. Many cats are also lactose intolerant after weaning so you'll potentially end up with kitty having diarrhea which can also lead to dehydration. *Goat milk is good for cats, if you want to give them a treat.)*

Multiple Locations

In multicat environments it's a good idea to have more than one water source (as well as more than one feeding station). Position water bowls around the house so that one cat doesn't have to cross another cat's area in order to



get to the water. This is especially important in homes where there is any tension between the cats.

Pet Water Fountains

If you're concerned that your cat may not be drinking enough water, try installing a pet water fountain. There are multiple types available. Some look like water fountains and some create a bubbling action. Your cat may have a preference. Since many cats like playing with the water droplets at the kitchen or bathroom faucet, offer the water fountain as a better alternative. Some fountains have flow regulators so you can adjust the water speed. Just as with a regular water bowl, make sure you keep the fountain clean. If you're concerned about kitty making a mess with water all over the floor, you can buy placemats with raised edges that will keep any spills contained.

If you don't mind that your cat is on the counter you can also install a motion-activated faucet so the water will flow whenever kitty is near it.



Other Ways to Entice Your Cat to Drink Water

Cats love to play and since so many like to play with water, try dropping an ice cube in the water bowl. Your cat may enjoy batting the cube around and in the process, begin repeatedly licking her wet paw.

<http://www.catbehaviorassociates.com/category/health/cat-eating-and-nutrition/>

Pam Johnson-Bennett, CCBC, PCBC is a Certified Cat Behavior Consultant

BITING AND SCRATCHING

When cats become overly excited during play with humans, they usually bite and start to scratch.

This is the same action two kittens or a mama cat



and kitten will display when playing. Kittens learn from their mama or siblings not to bite hard or scratch since it hurts them when mama bites back. I have seen Mama cats do this to teach their kittens not to bite. Kittens says, “ouch!” and stops biting.

If your kitty didn’t learn this from her mama or siblings you need to teach her.

Whenever your cat gets her claws out, stop the play session. This often causes the cat to retract her claws. If she does so, praise the cat and resume playing. If not, sternly say, “No”. At this stage, the cat will not understand what you are saying, but she will soon learn. The play session will not resume until kitty puts her claws away. If she does not, just walk away and ignore her.

Whenever the cat bites too hard, let her know that she is hurting you by shouting, “OUCH!” Walk away and end the play session immediately. Cats, especially kittens, love to play and they love to play with their owners. Ending a play session is an extremely effective punishment. The cat soon learns that it is her own rough behavior that causes an abrupt end of an enjoyable play session.

Provide your cat with acceptable ways to expend her energy and act out her predatory nature. Tie a feather or piece of crumpled paper to a length of string and run around the house dragging it behind. This gives kitty a moving target to chase and attack.

My favorite cat toy is one called “Da Bird”. It is feathers tied on to a small fishing pole with a fishing lure so when it moves through the air it twirls like a real bird. I guarantee you, your cat will feel like a mighty hunter! (Do a search at YouTube.com for Da Bird and you will see lots of happy cats playing with them.)



Let your cat pounce on and play with her own toys instead of your hands or feet. Do NOT allow it when they are tiny kittens or they will continue to do it as an adult. If you want to let her play with your hands then buy special gloves so the kitten does not associate her opponent with an arm or hand. You can find a variety of these in any pet store.



Train your cat to climb her scratching post by tossing toys on the top of it. **Train her to fetch.** Sit across the room or at the top of stairs and toss a toy, when your kitty picks it up, call her to you and give her a treat (reward) for retrieving it. **Give your cat active and regular play sessions and she will be less likely to bite and scratch you.**

NEVER SPANK OR HIT YOUR CAT, this only make her fear you, she doesn’t learn a different behavior.

CATS AND PLANTS

Many of us love our houseplants, it helps clean the air inside the home but we also love our cats! It is possible to have both BUT you must choose carefully.

Typically cats are pretty careful about what they eat, making poisoning relatively rare in cats. That said, when poisoning due to plant ingestion does happen in cats it is often down to a bored cat playing with and nibbling on a plant that looks fun, or cat's grooming.

Other cats are just playful and love to jump and explore. Playful or bored cats may spot a lush green vine hanging down and decide the plant looks like a fun new toy. Keeping houseplants out of a playful cat's reach can be a challenge so best to avoid all toxic plants indoors or even on a balcony.

Cats that are around toxic plants may get the seeds or pollen trapped in their fur or on their paws. Then, while the cat is grooming themselves the toxic substances are ingested.

For the sake of your cat's health, learn the names of the plants you have in your home and move outside or give away any toxic ones.

SAFE HOUE PLANTS



TOXIC HOUE PLANTS



Some are **VERY** toxic like **Lilies**, **bulbs** and **Oleander** and others are **mildly** toxic like **Dasies** and **Chrysanthemum**, depending on how much they eat.



The best place to search by plant name is at ASPCA <https://www.aspc.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>

**IF YOUR CAT INGESTS A TOXIC PLANT,
DONT WAIT, WIPE OUT MOUTH AND
GO TO VET IMMEDIATELY!
TAKE PART OF PLANT WITH YOU.**

Of all the common house plants the most dangerous is the Lily. Lilies can cause kidney failure, even if they just rub against a lily, in cats who come in contact with the flower's pollen, then ingest the pollen during grooming. If you have cut flowers in the house, toss out all lilies into a safe trash container.

ASPCA ANIMAL POISON CONTROL CENTER PHONE NUMBER: (888) 426-4435

How to Manage Your Cat and its Claws

Your cat will be much happier with its claws, and will want to use them. Fortunately, there are some simple steps in claw management that you can take to ensure that you and your cat remain happy.

Effective claw management involves three basic principles:

1. Give your cat something good to scratch.

Scratching posts are the foundation of a good claw management strategy. Every house should have at least one vertical scratching post, and the more the merrier. The post should be at least 28 inches tall in order for your cat to do a full stretch. It should have a large base so it doesn't tip over easily. The surface should provide resistance to claws being pulled through - the most common surfaces are sisal rope, tight-weave carpet or bear wood. A mixture of textures is best.

From the cat's perspective, there's nothing quite like a floor-to-ceiling, multi-tiered cat tree, as it serves as a scratching post, playground and bed. They are expensive, but they last a lot longer than smaller posts and will make both your cat and you much more happy. On the other end of the economical spectrum, horizontal cardboard scratch boxes are excellent scratching toys as well. Your best bet is a combination of all of the above. Try using catnip to mark acceptable scratching surfaces, or scratch it yourself to show how it's done.

Location is also important. Cats like to scratch when they make their grand entrance into a room, so it is a good idea to place scratching surfaces near doors. If your cat is ignoring a perfectly good scratching post, move it a couple of feet - this can make all the difference, for



reasons that are a complete mystery to anybody who doesn't have the mind of a cat.

2. Teach your cat which surfaces are not acceptable to scratch

Cats can be fairly particular about what they scratch. If you train your cat early to use the appropriate surfaces and avoid the inappropriate ones (furniture, legs, etc.), they will learn and be much less inclined to stray from their good habits.

The best way to teach a cat not to scratch something is by using a combination of positive and negative reinforcement. Negative reinforcement can include a squirt with a spray bottle filled with water, saying "no!" in a loud, disapproving way, shaking a can filled with pebbles or pennies, and even temporarily isolating the cat in a bathroom or other such space if it misbehaves. Positive reinforcement includes stroking, talking in a calm, approving voice, giving treats and otherwise showering the cat with positive attention. Be consistent with your reinforcement - you won't teach your cat anything by sending mixed messages.

You can also protect furniture by making it unappealing as a scratching surface - by temporarily cover the furniture with a sheet, slipcover or double-sticky tape.

3. Keep your cat's nails trimmed or capped

Regularly clipping your cat's nails will greatly reduce its ability to cause damage with its claws, and if done properly will not hurt the cat. It is best to use a trimmer designed for cat's claws rather than a scissors or human nail clipper.

If none of these are effective, you can always put SoftPaws on your cat's front nails. SoftPaws are small vinyl caps that are glued onto a cat's claws and serve as dull sheaths. They last for four-six weeks, are easy to use and replace and don't hurt the cat. They also come in different colors. SoftPaws are sold at veterinarians' and also over-the-counter at many pet stores. If you buy them at your vet, bring your cat and have them put on so you can see how it is done.

Adapted from Gary Loewenthal, "Why Cats Need Claws," THE WHOLE CAT JOURNAL, September 2002.

CAT SCRATCHERS



Your cat will be heaven in one of these huge cat trees

SAVE FURNITURE

...or happy with a small one that is great for looking out windows



Small but sturdy -- these will be used

...in love in a medium tree with plenty of places to play and nap



...posts are good if stable, look for a good base.

Have all three
 - Carpet
 - Rope
 - Cardboard



...cardboard scratchers are a must have!



...and if you want to be very creative, turn art into cat trees, visit www.thecatshouse.com



TRIMMING YOUR CAT'S CLAWS

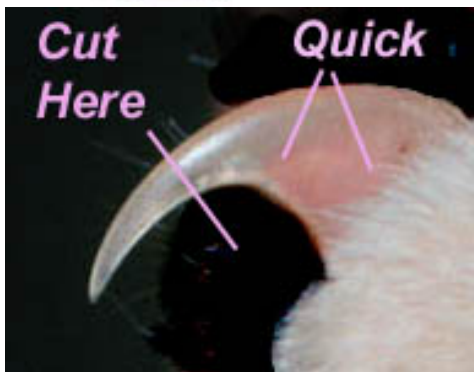
If possible start training your cat to have her claws trimmed as a kitten. Gently stroke your cat's paws often, getting her used to having her paws held before you attempt trimming. Be sure to reward your cat with a special food treat—one that she receives only during claw trimming or some other grooming procedure—during or immediately after trimming. The best time to trim your cat's claws is when she is relaxed or sleepy. **Never try to give a pedicure right after a stressful experience or an energetic round of play.**

Your cat should be resting comfortably on your lap, the floor, or a table. Hold a paw in one hand and press a toe pad gently to extend the claw.

The “quick” is the pink tissue on the inside of the claw. Avoid the quick when you trim the claw; cutting into it will cause pain and bleeding. You want to remove the sharp tip below the quick & away from the toe.

If your cat becomes impatient, take a break and try again later. Even if you can clip only a claw or two a day, eventually you'll complete the task.

Because cats do little damage with their rear claws and do a good job of keeping them trim themselves—by chewing them—many cat owners never clip the rear claws. Others trim their cats' rear claws three or four times a year or have them done by their veterinarian or a professional groomer.



Gently press the cat's toe pads to reveal sharp claws in need of a trim.

Notice the pink tissue (the quick) on the inside of the claw. Avoid the quick when you trim the claw; cutting into it will cause pain and bleeding. Remove the sharp tip below the quick (away from the toe), clipping about halfway between the end of the quick and the tip of claw. In the beginning clip just the very tip until you are more comfortable cutting a little more.

If you accidentally clip into the quick, don't panic. The claw may bleed for a moment, but it will usually stop very quickly. Soothe your cat by speaking softly to her and stroking her head. If the bleeding hasn't stopped after a minute or so, touch a styptic pencil to the claw end or pat on styptic powder or corn starch to help staunch the bleeding.

How often you need to clip your cat's claws depends somewhat on how much of the tip you remove, but usually a clipping every two weeks or even once a month will suffice. If your cat absolutely refuses to allow you to clip its claws, get help from your veterinarian or a professional groomer.

Special claw trimmers (two types are shown) are available from veterinarians or pet supply stores, but sharp nail clippers for humans also work. Keep a styptic (astringent) pencil or powder on hand in case you accidentally clip into the quick and bleeding hasn't stopped within a couple of minutes.



Reprinted from: <http://www.declawing.com/htmls/trimming.htm>

DECLAWING: ANOTHER VETERINARIAN'S PERSPECTIVE



*By: Michael W. Fox, D.Sc.,
Ph.D., B.Vet.Med., M.R.C.V.S.*

Say No! To De-clawing Cats

Many veterinarians routinely de-claw young cats. It's part of the package when they come in to be spayed/neutered. Many cats suffer as a consequence. The operation entails more than simply removing the claws, (onychectomy) under general anesthesia. It entails removal of the first digit (digitectomy). It's like you having your toes and fingers removed at the first joint, i.e. a radical phalangectomy.

Cats are very dexterous, and this operation essentially eliminates their dexterity, greatly reducing their behavioral repertoire when it comes to grasping and holding. It also hampers their ability to groom and scratch themselves normally. Their ability and self-confidence when it comes to climbing and general agility are similarly crippled. Their first line of defense—their retractable claws— is eliminated, which could make some cats more anxious and defensive.

De-clawed cats tend to walk abnormally back on their heels rather than on their entire pads because of the chronic pain at the end of their severed fingers and toes. They often develop chronic arthritis and as the front toe pads shrink, chronic bone infections are common.

Many cats find it painful to use the litter box, develop a conditioned aversion to using the box, and become un-housebroken. This is why many de-clawed cats are put up for adoption or are euthanized. They may also bite more, and become defensive when handled because their paws are hurting and infected.

I strongly advise all prospective cat owners, and those people with cats who are contemplating having the entire first digit—not simply trim the claw—removed surgically from their cats' paws—never to have this operation performed on their felines.

Cats need their claws to be cats, and the routine surgical amputation of all their first digits is considered unthinkable in the UK and many other countries where people love and respect their cats. They know that properly handled and socialized cats quickly learn not to scratch people, and will learn to enjoy using a scratch post and not destroy upholstered furniture.

According to the Paw Project (www.pawproject.org), de-clawing has become extremely common in the US and Canada in the past three decades. Before that time, it was rarely performed. In most countries, de-clawing is considered unethical and is not performed by veterinarians.

De-clawing is illegal in many countries, including Italy, Spain, England, Scotland, Wales, Austria, Croatia, Malta, Israel, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, France, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Slovenia, Brazil, Turkey and New Zealand.

Part of being a cat is to have claws. Out of respect for the nature of cats and their basic behavioral requirements in the confined domestic environment, caring and responsible cat owners effectively train their cats to use scratch-posts, scratch-boards and carpeted “condos” rather than resort to routine declawing, that amounts to a mutilation for convenience.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

From the perspectives of naturalistic philosophy and ethics, as defined in Buddhism and Taoism, the cat's ritualistic claw-scratching to mark the territorial domain is a vital yogic practice that helps cats relax and discharge pent up energies. Ethologically, cats' need to scratch suitable vertical and semi-vertical objects with their claw-marks and paw-pad pheromones is motivated by the desire for safety and security in a regularly marked, familiar territory. Scratch-post sites are tied to self-identity and recognition: self-awareness.

I have observed feral and free-roaming cats, and indoor cats all engaging in scratch-post-marking behavior, and to take this ritual away from them by de-clawing is to rob them both physically and psychologically of their first line of defense in a potentially hostile world; and of their ability to even be able to mark their territories effectively. So many begin to urine-spray-mark, or show behavioral changes associated with increased fear and vulnerability.

Cats are fastidious self-groomers, and they need their claws to be able to groom themselves properly. Unable to groom themselves, cats become more irritable, tense, depressed.

These problems are compounded by the chronic pain that many de-clawed cats suffer, and show lameness and abnormal vertebral and postural misalignments due to paw-pad pain from abnormal weight distribution on certain pads, and also from chronic inflammation, post-surgical infection, chronic arthritis and osteomyelitis, and contractions of the flexor tendons.

Such physical and psychological crippling of cats has become an accepted cultural norm. But such perverse defilement of the cat's nature, her ethos, such mutilation, rationalized disfigurement as a necessary convenience, is a sad reflection of our humanity, or lack thereof. Both must be addressed, and all veterinary colleges censored where de-clawing is taught to students with the expectation that this would be a routine source of income because of public demand, and if vets were not around to do it properly, many people would resort to using wire-cutters.

CONCLUSIONS

Performing phalangectomies on cats as a routine preventive measure, just incase they might scratch people or damage furniture, is a service of convenience to cat owners that I consider professionally unethical for veterinarians to offer and perform as a routine procedure on all cats that come through their doors. It is nothing less than a mutilation that takes away from cats an integral part of what makes them cats---a form of physical deprivation with often profound behavioral and psychological

ramifications, the risks of which far outweigh the benefits to uninformed cat owners and lovers.

Many veterinarians argue that it is a life-saving procedure because otherwise cats who might damage furniture or scratch their owners are often euthanized if they are not de-clawed. I see this as engaging in self-serving emotional blackmail, financial interests not withstanding.

As a profession, are we not giving a mixed message to the public in advocating companion animal health and welfare on the one hand, and not abandoning such practices that are considered unethical by veterinarians and their clients in many other countries?

Article basis for letter to Dr. Fox's colleagues, published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Feb. 15, 2006, pages 503-504.

Michael W. Fox, D.Sc., Ph.D., B.Vet.Med., M.R.C.V.S.

*Visit his website for more information:
www.twobitdog.com/DrFox*



Rescue's Note: *Our experience is that cat's are NOT dumped for scratching but instead because of some of the problems declawing creates such as not using the litter box and biting.*

Companies now make products like Soft Paws and can be bought in almost every pet store or Vets office. These are soft plastic caps that can be put on nails if all training fails to stop your cat from scratching.



Our experience is cat owners don't invest in things the cats like to scratch but get some cheap flimsy scratching post and expect the cat to use it, so the cat turns to the couch that is sturdy or a wicker hamper with a surface they like.

BEATING BOREDOM

Tips on keeping your cat happy and engaged

There is ample evidence that cats who spend their lives entirely indoors live much longer than their outdoor-only counterparts. But keeping an indoor cat happy as well as healthy means providing more than just good nutrition and regular veterinary care-you must also enrich your kitty's environment. Eliciting a cat's natural behaviors with hunting and foraging games can do wonders for your companion's well-being.

With a little creativity, you can keep your cat stimulated and interested, even in a small apartment and on a limited budget. And the good news is that enrichment research has shown that toys that are removed and then returned after several weeks regain much of their novelty; extend your enrichment budget by rotating your cat's toys regularly. Get started with a few of these feline friendly activities, but begin slowly and be sure to get a thumbs up from kitty's veterinarian.

Foraging Fun - Separate each day's food rations into small batches. Place the clusters around the house and then toss a few small treats in random directions. Not only will this encourage active foraging, it'll also keep kitty from scarfing down her food too quickly.

Pleasurable Puzzles - Toss a few treats into a square Rubbemaide bottle and leave it on the floor with the lid off for a great beginner puzzle. Any plastic container with a secure lid can become a hanging puzzle. Just cut two or three slots around the bottom outer edge of the container and place a few treats in the center. String a cord through the lid and hang this puzzle over a doorknob. Once your cat gets the hang of it, you can encourage exercise by raising it higher.

Scent Searching - Use old socks as washable scent baits. Just mark the sock with a dab of perfume, lotion, vanilla extract or even peanut butter, or place a pinch of any aromatic spice inside, then rub it over a slice of lunchmeat to pick up the scent. Scatter the socks throughout the house and your cat will be on the prowl for hours, delighted by the variety of scents. If you're pressed for time, simply mark a scent trail with a bit of cheese and then hide the cheese at the end of the trail. Catnip is another scent you can use as bait.

Bird Watching - Attach a bird feeder outside your cat's favorite window. Hungry birds will provide hours of entertainment. Don't place feeders too close to the ground as it leaves birds vulnerable to enemy attacks, and be sure to keep the window closed-excited cats can push right through screens.

Mouse Trap - Leave a ping-pong ball in the bathtub and watch as your cat makes it sail around the curves during her hunt for the elusive orb.

Crafty Cardboard - Use cardboard boxes as beds, dens, tunnels and mazes, Costco fruit and vegetable boxes are sturdy and free. Make a "busy box" by attaching small toys to short lengths of cord and suspending them from the ceiling of a large box. Cut window flaps in the den at various heights. Add a "Tiger Tug," a miniature version of a game popular with both tigers and chimps. Feed both ends of a length of parachute cord into the box through small holes. Tie a toy or a large knot on each end. When the cat tugs at one end, the other end mysteriously comes to life. For multicat households, run the ends into separate boxes.



Cat TV - Buy DVDs aimed at cats and also DVDs on birds, like the Audubon Society makes, they entertain cats for hours.

CATS LIKE - LARGE, CLEAN LITTER BOXES & soft barely sented/unsented litter

Start out without a cover on the box, possibly even a disposable one while kitty is getting comfortable in your home. If your home is two story have boxes upstairs & down. If multiple cats have extra boxes at least in the beginning until you are SURE cats are comfortable sharing boxes.

Cat Litter Boxes come in all sizes, shapes & prices
Choosing a litterbox that your cat likes is crucial to a happy cat & household

NOT your only cat box or your first ⇨



Automatic boxes are great but start out with them off & NOT for kittens!!

Plastic Storage Containers work, sometimes a hole is cut

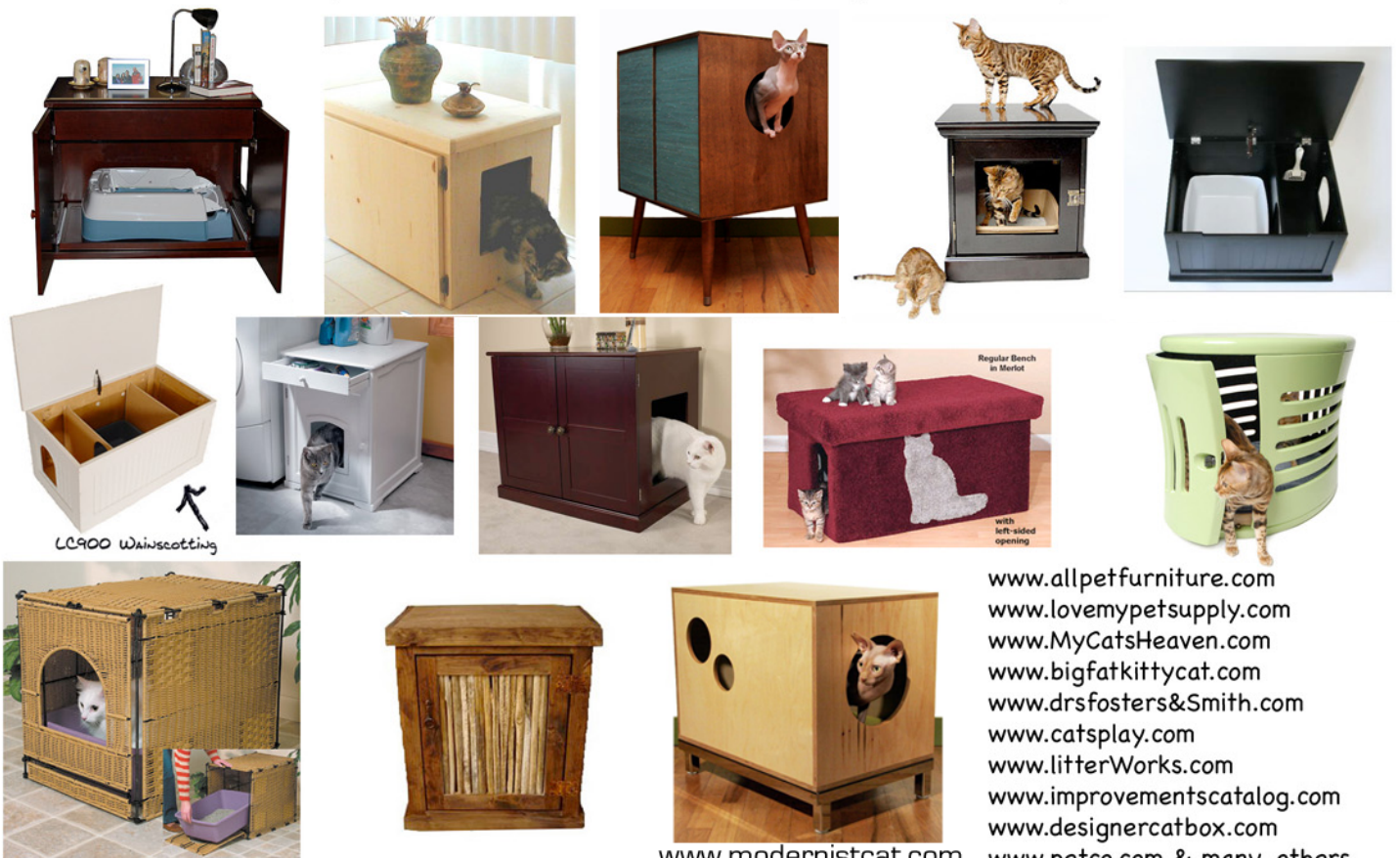


Disposables

As my vet says, you clean your bathroom at least once a week, do the same for your kitty. This means dump all litter, wash box and replace with clean litter, forget liners they aren't needed.

BOXES CAN BE HIDDEN WITH CLEVER FURNITURE or COVERS

(These came from websites listed below, many others available.)



LC900 Wainscotting

- www.allpetfurniture.com
- www.lovemypetsupply.com
- www.MyCatsHeaven.com
- www.bigfatkittycat.com
- www.drsfosters&Smith.com
- www.catsplay.com
- www.litterWorks.com
- www.improvementscatalog.com
- www.designercatbox.com
- www.petco.com & many, others...

SOLVING LITTER BOX PROBLEMS, PART 1

One of the more frequent problems that cat owners face at one time or another is that of a cat refusing to use the litter box, even after using it for years in the past. This behavior may nearly always be corrected with proper attention to the cat's health and environment.

The first thing to do is to rule out a physical problem by taking your cat to a veterinarian for a physical examination. Common medical causes for inappropriate elimination is a urinary tract infection or crystals in the urine, either of which can make urination very painful. Cats often associate this pain with the litter box and begin to avoid it. Left untreated, a urinary tract infection or blockage from crystals can cause permanent damage or be fatal, so do NOT delay in seeking medical attention.

Once you've ruled out medical issues, you will need to turn your attention to the cat's environment. Cats may stop using the litter box because of a radical change in their surroundings, such as the introduction of a new pet, moving homes, rearranging furniture, new person in household, remodeling, or even a new baby. In the best case scenario, you will plan ahead and ease the transition. For instance, if you move, introduce your cat to the new home the same way you would bring an entirely new animal in—start in a confined, isolated space and gradually let the cat explore his or her new surroundings. If you remodel your house, keep the cat isolated from the area and only when it is complete should you slowly re-introduce him to the area. For more details see chapter on *Introducing New Kitty to Your Home*.

Cats may also stop using the litter box because they are dissatisfied with the type of box or type of litter you use. A change in the box or litter can cause them to stop using it; try and stay consistent for the life of the cat. If you do want to change do it gradually by adding just a little of the new litter into the box and over time add more and more until you have made the transition. If this doesn't work, go back to the first litter.

Some cats even like to have two boxes—one for each function. I have been told this especially true of Persian cats. Some cats like covered boxes, others like open ones. Some don't want to share a box,

others don't mind at all. Some cats don't like liners or scented litter. In short, you will need to be prepared to experiment and slowly rule things out.

Studies done by veterinary schools have shown that most cats prefer fine, smooth unscented or barely scented litter in a clean box. If you are bringing a new cat into the home we recommend using a fine unscented litter in a large box without a liner. Liners can tear with the cats claws.

Also our vets recommend cleaning the box every week with a mild detergent, not strong bleach, and filling with clean litter. Once vet once said to me, you clean your bathroom every week don't you, well you cats wants the same level or cleanliness. A dirty litter box is another reason cats mess outside the box.

Anytime your cat messes outside the box, clean the soiled area promptly and thoroughly (as otherwise the cat may continue using the area as a de facto bathroom) and use positive reinforcement to re-introduce your cat to the litter box. Find urine stains with a fluorescent black light, available at hardware and pet supply stores. The stains will glow under the black light. Once you locate a stain, clean it with an enzymatic cleaner made especially for pet odors, available at pet supply stores. Don't use ammonia or other strong-smelling household cleaners. These will encourage your cat to re-mark in that area.

You may also want to isolate the cat to retrain—more on that on the last page of Litter Box Issues, Part 2.

Do not yell at or strike your cat if he or she does not use the litter box. Litter box problems are almost always temporary and reversible, but a cat can develop litter box aversion if it associates elimination with punishment. While you aren't expected to celebrate if your cats pees on your sofa, it will only make matters worse if you punish the cat.

Animals don't understand punishment after the fact, even if it's only seconds later. If you are lucky enough to catch her in the cat, interrupt by making a startling noise but be careful not to scare her. Immediately take her to where the litter box is located and set her on the floor in front of it. If she wanders over to the litter box, wait and praise her after she eliminates in the box. If she takes off in another direction, she may want privacy, so watch from afar until she goes back

to the litter box and eliminates, then praise her when she does. If she doesn't go to it, consider isolating her in the bathroom with the litter box for a time.

Steps to Avoid Litter Box Aversion

Your cat may have decided that the litter box is an unpleasant place to eliminate if the box is not clean enough for her, if she has been started by a noise while using the box, if she has been "ambushed" while in the box either by another cat, a child, a dog, or by you, or if she associates elimination with unpleasantness.

- Keep the litter box extremely clean. Scoop at least once a day, twice is better. Change the litter completely every week and wash the box with a mild detergent. Cats have an extremely sensitive sense of smell so if you can smell the box, from the cat's perspective it must really reek.
- You should have at least one litter box for every two cats. If your home is two story we recommend one upstairs and one downstairs.
- Add a new box in a different location than the old one and use a different type of litter in the new box. Because your cat has decided that her old litter box is unpleasant, you'll want to make the new one different enough that she doesn't simply apply the old, negative associations to the new box.
- Sometimes it's the location of the box that is a problem. Make sure the litter box isn't near an appliance that makes noise or other wise is in a noisy area. Some cats will not use a box in the laundry room if the washer or dryer are running, they want a more quiet location.
- If ambushing is a problem, try to create more than one exit from the litter box inclosure or area, so that if the "ambusher" is waiting by one exit your cat always has an escape route.

Surface Preferences

All animals develop preferences for a particular surface on which they like to eliminate. These preferences may be established early in life, but they may also change for reasons that we don't always understand. Your cat may have a surface preference if she consistently eliminates on a particular texture, such as a soft-textured surface (carpet, bedding or clothing) or a slick-textured surface (such as tile, bathtubs or sinks).

- If your cat is eliminating on soft surfaces, try using a high quality, scoopable litter that is soft and fine, preferably unscented. Petco's Pet Gold is like this. Put a soft rug under the litter box.
- If your cat is eliminating on slick, smooth surfaces, try putting just a very thin layer of litter at one end of the box, leaving the other end bare and put the box on a hard floor. You might also use a large plastic storage container with a smooth bottom for the litter box.
- If your cat has a history of being outdoors, add some soil to the litter box.

You can also try making the area where she has been inappropriately eliminating aversive to her by covering it with an upside-down carpet runner or mat or aluminum foil or by placing citrus-scented cotton balls over the area.

There is also a litter on the market called Dr. Elsey's Cat Attract that is guaranteed or your money back to attract cats to the box. Most cats love it.

NOTE, the litter your newly adopted kitty has been using is checked below:

- Grain based (Swheat, Worlds Best)
- Fine Sand (no or slightly perfumed)
- Store brand sand

If your cat is having litter box problems, don't worry—you are not alone. The internet is full of good information and suggests on what to do.

One of my favorite is *The Litter Box From Your Cat's Point of View* by Lisa A. Pierson, DVM at this link: <http://www.catinfo.org/?link=litterbox> This is extremely thorough, I wish I had room to reprint the entire web article in this adoption package.

Litterbox, Litterbox, Where Are You Litterbox?

There are a few other things to keep in mind about the litterbox. Is it located in the right area? Cats do not like to have their litterbox too close to their food and bedding. They do like to have a consistent and private place to do their business. So don't put the box in the busiest room of your house.

Occasionally there may be something about the box or location of the box that inhibits the cat from using it. I remember one woman who accidentally dropped a roll of toilet paper on the cat's head while he was in the box. Another person turned on the shower before closing the curtain and the cat got sprayed with water while in the litterbox. Both of these cats were afraid to even go into the bathroom, much less use the litterbox there after these experiences. We had to temporarily put the boxes just outside the bathroom door.

It may seem like common sense, but is the box easy for the cat to get to? I'm surprised at how many owners keep the box in a closet and then forget to leave the closet door open!

Another owner kept moving the box every day trying to find a place where his dog could not get into it. The dog probably enjoyed the challenge of the search but I'm sure the cat didn't.

And what about the litter itself? Every cat has his own likes and dislikes, but most cats like clean, absorbant litter that feels and smells natural to them. Sometimes they are repelled by fancy litters with additives and perfumes that are more for our benefit than for the cat's.

I've Cleaned Up the Act, But ...

OK, so you have a clean litterbox with the right litter and it's located in a quiet, private, easy-to-get-to place. Now what? Many cats won't magically start using their box again just because you've started keeping it clean.

First of all, the cat won't know that the box is really clean. After all, it's been dirty for the last six months so why should things be any different now? He will just assume it's still dirty and go straight to where he knows it will be clean. Whenever the cat pees in the closet or poops under the piano, you don't let it sit there for a week. You clean it up immediately! The cat keeps going back there because he knows it's always clean.

I drive from San Francisco to Los Angeles a lot and there are a few gas stations along the way that I simply don't stop at anymore because I've learned from experience that their facilities are never clean. I'm not going to waste my time stopping to check them out, even if they posted a sign that read, "Attention! Our bathrooms have been cleaned!" I would just laugh and drive right on by. So your cat too probably looks at the litterbox, laughs and cruises right on by.

Some owners go berserk when they find puddles or piles somewhere in the house. Often times they scream, grab the cat and throw her in the litterbox - or they grab the cat's paws and force her to dig in the litter. Cats hate to be forced into doing anything. These cats avoid the box because they have learned that it's a torture chamber. They associate the box with unpleasant experiences.

In order to turn this all around, you must convince the cat that the litterbox is both a clean and pleasant place to be. Whenever your cat is hungry or in a playful mood, get out a special treat or her favorite toy and lure her near her box.

If those gas stations had a sign that read, "Ten dollars to everyone who checks out our facilities," you bet I wouldn't just drive by and laugh. These guys are actively trying to convince me that they've changed their ways and their human litterboxes are clean and pleasant. You must apply the same bribery techniques and principles to your cat.

Most hungry cats will happily follow a chunk of turkey dangling in front of their nose. Entice kitty to follow the food or a toy to his box, then enthusiastically praise and reward kitty when you get to the box. Within a short time, kitty will get the hang of the game and you can begin calling him to come towards you and the box from different locations in your home. Work especially hard to call kitty away from areas he has soiled in the past. When he arrives at the box, profusely praise and reward him. Now kitty will see that not only is the box clean, but it's also a rewarding and pleasant place to be. The next step is to praise and reward him for times he actually uses his box.

What Goes In, Must Come Out

We expect cats to train themselves because cats are instinctively clean. Litterbox training will progress much more quickly if you can reward and praise the cat when he is using his box. The timing of the reward is extremely important. In order to effectively reward the cat for using the box, you must *be there* when

he uses the box.

If you must be there to reward him, then obviously you need to know when he has to go, or you'll be hanging around the litterbox forever. This brings up the importance of schedules. A cat's physical system is like clock work. If the input is at the same time every day, the output will take on a corresponding schedule. Once you know the approximate time your cat will need to eliminate, you can arrange to be present to reward and praise him when he eliminates in the box.

Now you only have to hang around the box for about 15 minutes instead of all day long. If you keep an eye on your cat during this time, you can also prevent him from going near those places that he used to soil.

If It's Still Not Working

For severe litterbox problems, it may be necessary to confine your cat with a litterbox, her toys, scratching post and bed to one room for a few days. By confining your cat, she can more quickly learn to use her box. First, if you and your cat are both in the same room, then it will be easier for you to keep an eye on her, so it will be easier for you to praise and reward her at the exact right moment.

Second, if you're not there, the chances are high that she will use the box on her own. If given the choice of using litter or a linoleum or tile floor, your cat will choose the litter which absorbs the urine and gives her the opportunity and ability to cover her feces.

Cats are creatures of habit. They usually return to the same places to do their business.

So additionally, confinement is used to help break the cat's habit of eliminating in inappropriate areas. If she doesn't have access to these areas, then she doesn't have the opportunity to keep reinforcing her old habit.

If you are turned off to the idea of confinement, then you probably don't really understand it. Maybe you've tried it in the past, went about it the wrong way and had a bad experience, or the cat had a bad experience. If your attitude is that confinement is a prison sentence, then it is not going to work. Confinement should be a positive and rewarding training experience. Review the section that explains the use and purposes of temporary confinement.

Summary

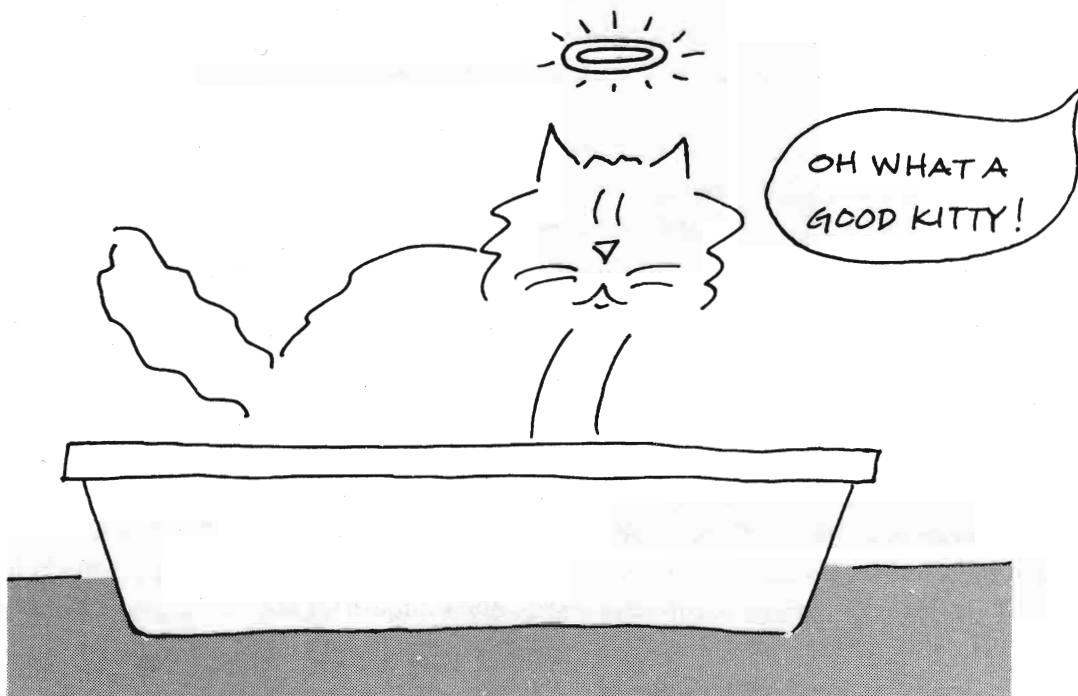
1. The litterbox must always be clean. Sometimes all it can take is neglecting the box just once and the cat will feel forced to go

somewhere else. Now you have to start all over again retraining your cat to use his box. So don't forget to clean the box without fail.

2. Make sure you have the right number of litterboxes in appropriate locations with the right litter.

3. Praise and reward your cat whenever you see her use her box. During initial training, it is important to be present as much as possible to reward your cat when she uses the box. Once your cat is trained, it is still equally as important to maintain the training by regularly praising your cat anytime you see her use the box. If you forget to reward your cat, she may forget to use her box. Never take good behavior for granted or you may find yourself having to retrain your cat to use her box.

4. Training may require the use of confinement. This is only a temporary measure to speed up the training process and to help break bad habits.



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MOVING WITH YOUR CAT

It doesn't matter if you are moving across town or across the country – you need to do a little planning to make it easy for you *and* your kitties.

Before the move:

- Get out the carriers cats will travel in.
- One cat per carrier, unless small kittens, this applies even if they are best friends.
- NO TEMPORARY CARDBOARD carriers.
- Carrier must be roomy enough for cat to lie down comfortably (unless traveling by plane then “fit under seat” rule applies).
- If you need to get another carrier, try the local thrift stores, often only cost for \$5–10.00.
- Leave carriers open on the floor, for a week or more, with door secured so it can't close.
- Put small bed/pad inside, if they like treats add them too. This is to get them comfortable with carriers.
- Do not fill carrier with big cat bed, better to have space for cat to move around.
- Get a foam pad for carrier that absorbs pee or small training pads for bottom of carriers.
- Buy screw-on water bowl, that won't take up much room in carrier, best are found in bird section of pet stores.

Day movers (or friends helping you pack) come:

- Lock cats in one room with sign on door, “DO NOT OPEN, Scared Cats Inside”. More than one cat has gotten out and lost when strangers are inside moving boxes and furniture.

Moving day:

- **Do not sedate your cat even if flying or traveling by car.**
- Feed cats normally in the morning, early enough so hopefully they will use the litterbox.
- Put cats in one room with their carriers so they aren't hiding when you want to leave.
- Put cats INTO carriers and then into car just before you are ready to drive off.

Note: Do not fill water bowl until cats in car then using bottle pour in water through grate until it's 1/2 full.



Traveling in car:

- Don't be surprised if your cat doesn't eat or drink water while car is moving or even when you stop for short breaks, I have transported cats for 12 hours and most adult cats don't eat or want to use litter box while moving. If transporting kittens put in small pan with litter.
- If outside temperatures of over 70 degrees -- when you stop for gas pull into bay with shade, open ALL of the windows so breeze gets in. Use drive through eateries, don't leave cats unattended.
- If you stop for the night – bring cats inside in carriers, place them in the bathroom with door closed with food, water and small litterbox. I like to use a grain-based litter like Swheat or World's Best Cat Litter that leaves no clay. Even their most outgoing cat may hide under the bed in a strange place.

Traveling by air:

- Before traveling the cat needs a Health Certificate from your vet. Do not wait until the day before to get it.
- Get a halter for your cat since you have to take the cat out at security points & a good quality airline approved carrier. Arrive early at airport.

At the new home:

- Even if no one is in the house put cats in one room and get them used to the new home like you did when you first brought them to your home. Cats have marked a new home because they are scared.
- Let them settle in that room for 1 to 4 weeks and CERTAINLY the day movers come with your things keep them securely confined to one room with sign on door, DO NOT OPEN CAT INSIDE.

CARE FOR YOUR PETS FOR LIFE, THEIR LIFE

TAKE THE TIME TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR PETS

Every day we get phone calls or see wonderful animals dropped off at “Animal Shelters” when



a human has passed away or gone into a nursing home and left their beloved pets behind. No formal pet guardian was established, leaving the pets homeless.

Many people think their relatives will do the “right thing” and take good care of their companion animals. Sadly this is often not the case. Often the companion animal is confused at losing its loved one and home. The friend or relative doesn’t know how to properly introduce the new animal to their household so they think it won’t work out and decide to take it to a shelter.

Many people think they are doing the right thing for their friend or relative’s pet not realizing, or not wanting to know, the animal will most likely be euthanized. Most of these pets are seniors and confused by the change, they are considered unadoptable and euthanized as soon as allowed by law, which is usually a few days.

Please make sure your pet is cared for in the event of your demise. Take the time to complete the attached Pet Guardian Form for ALL of your pets. Talk to the person’s mentioned on the form, consider leaving funds or life insurance to cover your pet’s lifetime care. This is a small kindness you can do that will guarantee your companion animals a happy long life.

California allows for animal trusts, consider such an option. Please review any forms you complete with your Will and Trust Attorney.

Additionally take the time to write out information about each pet. Simple information you carry in your head should be written down so the person or organization caring for your pet will make it as comfortable as possible.

This information should be kept with the Pet Guardian Form so it’s readily available: Pet’s name, age, health issues, medicine, spay/neutered, name and phone number of vet, diet wet & dry food brands, feeding frequency and personality (timid, outgoing, playful, couch potato) are all important. If certain pets are bonded please note this so they can be kept together. If the pet was adopted from a rescue organization include their information and ask them to contact the group for assistance.

Our pets give us so much love, we can do the same for them after we are gone.

For the love of your pets, care for them for life, *their life.*



We don't expect you to be buried with your pet as this gentleman was but please be sure they are taken care of.

PET GUARDIAN

In the event of my severe illness or death, please implement the following instructions.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

I have made arrangements with the individual(s) listed with each pet to care for him/her. Please contact them at once, as my pet(s) will need to be cared for immediately.

If they are unable or unwilling to accept my animals, my Executor shall select an appropriate person to accept the animals and treat them as their companion animals. If no such person(s) can be found then I direct my Executor to contact a 501c3 non-profit animal rescue organization with a stellar reputation to re-home my animals. I give my animals to such person(s) or organization.

Under NO circumstances shall my pet(s) be turned into a kill shelter. Under NO circumstances shall my pet(s) be euthanized unless it is found to be suffering from an incurable illness and this is verified by an exam and in writing by my veterinarian, or is he/she is unavailable by two other licensed veterinarians.

I direct my Executor to give \$ _____ from my estate to each person who accepts my animals, and I request (but do not direct) that these funds be used for the care of my animals. If it is an organization that takes my animals I direct my Executor to give \$ _____ from my estate for each animal. These funds may come from any designated insurance policy and from the rest of my estate.

I have an insurance policy, which I designate to be used for the care of my pets: Yes No

Insurance Company: _____ Tel # _____ Policy # _____

Policy is located Home in _____ Safety Deposit Box Other _____

The Executor of my will:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

VETERINARY INFORMATION

Veterinarian Name: _____ Vet's Phone #: _____

Vet Address: _____

Veterinarian Name: _____ Vet's Phone #: _____

Vet Address: _____

Pets visit the veterinarian? Annually As Needed Both

PETS RECORD IN MY HOME, are located: _____

My choice of non-profit animal rescue group(s): _____

Print Name Signature Date

WITNESSES:

Print Name Signature Date

Print Name Signature Date

WHAT YOUR CAT MISSES BY NOT GOING OUTDOORS

Cats are curious animals, and we all know the saying, “Curiosity Killed the Cat.”

Many people think their cat will not be content if it can't go outside – that just isn't so. Cats stare out of doors and windows because they are curious and like to observe.



These are the things your cat will miss by not going outside –

- Won't be killed by a coyote in the daytime while napping on your patio.
- Won't be hit by a car when kitty decides to cross the street.
- Won't be killed by a hawk or owl that can pick up an adult cat.
- Won't be poisoned accidentally or intentionally by everyday chemicals used in gardens, cleaning and cars.
- Won't be dumped in the country or at an animal shelter by a neighbor who doesn't appreciate your cat using his garden as a bathroom.
- Won't roam too far and become lost.
- Won't be infested with fleas and ticks or worms.
- Won't catch a deadly disease like Feline Leukemia.
- Won't have huge vet bills due to attacks or illnesses caught from other animals.
- Won't spray because he/she thinks he has to protect his territory inside and out.
- Won't be stolen.
- Won't be killed or tortured by a cruel person who hates cats.

We all want our cats to have a fulfilling life full of adventures, good food, sunny spots to nap in and a lot of love. We also want them to live a long, healthy life. Cats that stay strictly indoors can have it all—favorite sunny spots to nap safely, all kinds of adventures with furry catnip mice and other creative toys and they will live to enjoy old age. In Southern California due to car traffic and wild animals indoor/outdoor cats are killed or die from disease often before their third birthday while indoor cats live 12-20 years and longer. I think your cat would rather live a long life than die young.

If you really think your cat will not be content unless it can go outdoors, then create a safe outdoor space using cat proof fencing or coyote prevention roll bars. You can find companies on the internet that provide the tools you need to make a fenced in yard or patio cat safe.

Remember you wouldn't let your three year old child run outside into danger even though he might want to, so don't let your cat.

COYOTES ARE HERE TO STAY

Like it or not, Coyotes are here to stay and they are in EVERY neighborhood in Southern California. They are smart and efficient hunters. They hunt in packs and in daylight hours. They have learned many people think it's safe to let their cat sunbathe in their yard and just come in at night. IT'S NOT! If you can't keep your cats indoors, don't get a cat.



FINDING YOUR LOST CAT

Call Rescue Immediately If Your Cat Gets Out!

Oh no! You kitty got outside and you can't find her. Don't despair. There are some constructive steps you can take to help her get home again.

FIRST – take action immediately; don't wait for a few days to see if she will find her way home. Cats do not "run away" or "stray." They investigate new places and find themselves trapped, they get lost if driven away from their territory, they are spirited off by circumstances beyond their control, they become ill or injured and creep away to a quiet dark place. Cats rarely voluntarily leave their home, even if badly treated. **It is imperative when a cat turns up missing to begin an aggressive search immediately. Your cat's life could depend on it.**

SEARCH HOUSE & IMMEDIATE AREA --- Cats are excellent hiders. Look first in your immediate area including checking the house carefully unless someone saw your cat get out. Look in every nook and cranny. Don't assume that your cat would never crawl into some tiny space or that they can't possibly fit (they will and do!). The more scared they are the deeper they will hide. Use a powerful flashlight even in the daytime.



Check all appliances – under, behind and inside - washing machines, clothes dryers, stoves, refrigerators, dishwashers and water heaters. Cats LOVE boxes so check them all. Move everything from under beds, in closets, bookcases, shelves, drawers, cabinets. Check ALL drawers and cupboards...

Listen for sounds of distress. Cats explore weird spaces and can be attracted to dark, normally inaccessible places and even to vertical spaces. That's why you look behind and under appliances and in spaces you just don't think they could possibly fit. If you have been remodeling or making changes, had doors open to places like the attic, check these spaces remember cats are great explorers.

Thoroughly check your own yards-front, back and sides in case the cat has been injured or gotten stuck somewhere. Look under bushes, under cars, crawl spaces under the house, inside any shed or garage, drain pipes, culvert pipes... Don't forget to look up too – cats do climb so check roofs, overhangs, openings to attics, trees, gutters...

WALK AROUND – Once you have thoroughly searched your own area, start checking with the neighbors. Knock on doors and if home ask to look in their yards, garages, basements, etc. I had a cat that every time he got out would hide in my neighbor's garage. That was the first place I looked.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS —

1. **START SEARCH IMMEDIATELY.** Indoor only cats never go far. They go into survival mode and hide in silence. Most of them will not respond when they are in survival mode. Indoor/outdoor cats go further so you will need to search several blocks in all directions for them.

2. **ONCE IT IS QUIET AND DARK OUTSIDE IS THE BEST TIME TO FIND A MISSING INDOOR CAT.** This is the time they become most active and responsive. Sit and quietly call for your kitty. Try to stay low, standing is intimidating to cats, walk slow. Take a friend and flashlight if walking several blocks, don't stop after a few days. Carry favorite food and something that smells like them.

3. **PLACE SOME DIRTY SOCKS, T-SHIRT AND PILLOW CASES OUTSIDE.** Your scent will attract your kitty. Leaving cat bedding, a scratcher also may help but can attract other cats and predators. If you have a garage, place the items near the garage door and crack the door enough for her to get in. Also works if you have a door or window you can leave ajar without other pets getting out. If no garage, place items near doors.

4. **MAKE A FLYER –** One of the best things you can do is make a flyer and put it at EVERYONE's doorstep in a several block radius of your home. Put a good description on the flyer and photo and the note **"PLEASE hold on to this flyer in case you see my kitty in the next few weeks or months"**. Offer a reward (don't state the amount). Include cross streets where lost (not exact home address), contact phone numbers and e-mail address.

If you make it in color even the better. Post at cluster mailboxes, vet offices, poles at intersections, pet stores, small neighbor markets. Businesses like laundromats, cleaners, vets offices but again the most important ones will be on everyone's doorstep for several blocks from where your cat disappeared. I know of a

couple that got their cat back after 3 months due to flyer in a mailbox.

More cats are reunited with their guardians because of flyers than anything else, so do one right away and don't be embarrassed to put it everywhere.



On flyer include PHOTO, offer REWARD (but don't need to put amount), say do not try to pick up but call ANY hour. List 2 cell numbers if you can. Ask them to search garages, storage sheds, bushes...places a cat could hide. **Ask them to check all security cameras.** Include street and cross street where cat went missing. Some people don't pay attention to posted flyers so flyers on doorsteps VERY important.

5. If you live in an area with stray dogs and predators DO NOT leave food outside, it can attract dogs, predators and aggressive cats. Because indoor only cats hide so well they are not as likely to be killed by a predator. If you can watch the food, leaving their favorite food out once it's quiet and dark it may help them come to food. Pick up food if you can't watch it and if it will attract other animals.

6. KEEP WALKING
– Start walking if you can while it is daylight but go out again after dark when it's quiet in your neighborhood. Do walk in the daytime to talk to people that wouldn't be out at night.

If you can, enlist a friend to walk with you but be sure he/she is the quiet type. Carry a powerful flashlight at

all times you will need it to look under cars...

Talk to everybody you meet as you hand out the flyers, knock on doors. People getting into cars, walking by, the postman, everyone! Kids are great at finding pets so be sure to enlist the neighborhood children.

Ask not only if they have seen your cat but also if they heard or saw anything unusual in the neighborhood. Take a note pad with you so you can write down what they tell you. Sometimes utility workers can have manholes open or animal services might have been in the area picking up strays.

Sometimes cats climb into moving vans or parked cars and are not found immediately. Was such a vehicle in your area at the time of disappearance?

Carry something that smells like your cat and you and some good smelly cat tuna (or whatever her favorite flavor of wet food).

Call your cat's name and she might come out from hiding. Make any other noise that your cat is familiar with. It's also important to stop periodically, be quiet, and listen for your cat to make a noise in reply.

Survival mode lasts 5 to 14 days but can last longer. Once their hunger gets to a maximum they snap out of it but this is a dangerous time because they come out of hiding. The majority of cats will try to make a break for home on the 5th night. While in survival mode they may not respond to your voice or smell.

When out looking, carry your cell phone, so you can call someone if you need help without leaving where your cat is once you spot her.

If you do pick her up, **expect her to bolt**, hold her firmly by the scruff at the back of the neck while supporting her with other arm. Carry a towel or something to wrap cat in. You can carry a soft carrier with you IF your cat is not afraid of a carrier.

7. DON'T GIVE UP, it can take months to find a missing indoor only cat. Use a flashlight as late at night as you can to look in trees, under cars and in bushes. Try to look for the glow of her eyes.

The best chance of you being reunited with your cat is to do a methodical search of the area and repeat. Most indoor only cats will be within 160 feet of your home but some have been found 2 blocks away. Not unusual for cat not to respond at first. (Knew someone who cat didn't respond for 7 days and it was in the bushes near her home.)



8. **It's VERY VERY important that you look for cat as late at night as you can.** If you have other cats, watch them. If they are spending a lot of time looking out a certain window, that's a good indication the missing cat is in that area.

9. **SECURITY CAMERAS** – Wildlife and motion activated cameras are also helpful. Ring has a neighborhood sharing feature for people with Ring cameras. Post photo and street there.

10. **CONSIDER TRAPPING** – A lot of people are successful trapping their indoor only cats once they identify an area they might be hiding. If you decide to trap, you must watch the trap closely but do right net to it. Contact Rescues who TNR to borrow traps. They will instruct you on its use. Use a couple of traps.

11. **SOCIAL MEDIA** -- FaceBook, Instagram...use all available. Include street, cross street and city. If you don't know how, contact someone who does. Post to pages dedicated to lost pets and neighborhood pages. Post on websites Pawboost and Nextdoor. Ask everyone to share. **Use them all IMMEDIATELY.**

12. **VISIT SHELTERS** – All city and county shelters have websites with animal photos of cats, but not all are up to date. They guesstimate the age and can be way off and the photos can be terrible.

Visit all the shelters near you, ask to see ALL of the cats, many are not in public view if considered fractious (many of these are friendly scared cats) or sick. Check all local shelters every few days do not rely on descriptions and sometimes even photos.

Leave flyers but do NOT expect to get a call from the shelter if a cat that looks like yours comes in, EVEN if they say they will call. You have to go back every 3 days (stray cats are held for 4 days in California so to be safe go every 3 days).

13. **LOCAL VETERINARIAN OFFICES** – Call ALL of the local veterinarian offices and also all emergency vet clinics too. Send them all flyers. All vets have microchip scanners so leave your cats chip #.

14. **ASK FOR HELP** – Don't be embarrassed to contact any Cat Rescue near you and ask for help. Rescue has a network throughout Southern California. We can also post on the Internet through different animal rescue related groups/lists.

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN – Unfortunately, cats do get killed on streets. If you want to find out if this happened to your cat you must check with the correct

County or City department. Your City Animal Control can tell you which department to contact.

WORDS OF CAUTION -- It's sad but true, some people prey upon others' misfortune NEVER respond to a "found" pet contact alone. Take a friend or two along with you. Arrange to meet in a public place.

Beware of money scams. Never agree to give or mail money to anyone without having your cat in your arms. Anyone asking you to do this is trying to steal from you.

WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR CAT

ALWAYS TRANSPORT IN A CAT CARRIER, I cringe every time someone says to me, "my cat hates to go in a carrier so I just carry her in my arms." There are a million things that can scare your cat and it can bolt from your arms, dash into traffic or go under a fence and hide in a totally strange place. Your cat will NOT come to you when it is frightened in a strange place, it will hide. Also if your car breaks down or you are in a car accident you can't leave your cat in the vehicle.

So please, NEVER take your cat to the vet or anywhere else unless it is secured in a sturdy carrier or on a harness & leash. The boxes you buy at pet stores are for one-time emergency trips. I had a cat break out of one in my car in less than 5 minutes and this was a friendly cat! In emergency situations use a pillowcase.



KEEP A COLLAR ON YOUR INDOOR CAT with a current phone numbers if your cat is a door darter.

Use only a safety collar, one that stretches or breaks away so cat can get loose if tangled in something. DO NOT put a collar on a kitten; they do not weigh enough to make the collar break away. Most important if cat not microchipped.

MICROCHIP YOUR CAT or if already microchipped be sure to keep the database current and report lost cat.

TRAIN YOUR CAT TO COME Train your cat to come to an "Acme Dog Whistle". Or train to come to a can of treats when shaken. To train, whistle before feeding and reward with treat when comes to your whistle or shaken can.



CAT HEALTH 101: WHEN TO VISIT THE VET

It is a good practice to bring your cat to the veterinarian for an annual checkup. Even if your cat appears outwardly healthy, annual visits are important to monitor your cat's eyes, teeth and organs.

Cats can hide their problems well and early detection and treatment of illnesses can make a huge difference in the success of the treatment as well as its cost.

You should also bring your cat in for regular blood panels once she hits seven years of age. These can help detect the onset of organ failure, thyroid problems and other medical issues and get you treating them right away, ultimately prolonging the length and quality of your cat's life.

Of course, there are times when a cat's behavior or appearance tells you that she needs medical attention right away.

Going Outside the Box: When cats don't use the litter box, they almost always are trying to communicate that there is something wrong. The problem may be behavioral (i.e., stress, another animal they don't like, etc.), but it may also be medical.

- **Inappropriate urination:** This could be a sign of cystitis (bladder inflammation), a urinary tract infection or bladder or kidney stones. A dry food diet is a leading cause of these conditions. If your cat repeatedly enters the litter box without urinating or cries in pain when urinating, seek immediate medical attention, as this could be due to a ruptured bladder or a severe case of crystals.
- **Inappropriate defecation:** This could be a sign of colitis (inflammation of the colon) or a number of other bowel disorders, especially if there is bleeding the stool.

Not eating: An ongoing lack of interest of food can indicate a number of medical problems and warrants a visit to the vet, especially for kittens or older cats that are more adversely affected by loss of calories. An overweight cat that goes longer than 48 hours without eating is in danger of developing Hepatitis Lepidus's (Fatty Liver Disease), which can be fatal.

Hiding: Hiding is an instinctive response to illness or any perceived threat. If your kitty is hiding, consider

the following checklist: is she eating and/or drinking regularly? Is she using the litter box regularly, with normal-appearing urine and feces? Is she listless (a possible sign of fever), hissing or growling (a possible sign of pain)? If there are problems in any of these areas, especially unusual hiding behavior, you should seek veterinary attention.

Unusual hair loss: Shedding warrants a trip to the vet if it is excessive, resulting in bald spots, or if it is accompanied by skin irritation, excessive grooming or other signs of illness. The presence of bald patches may indicate ringworm or mange, both of which are easily treatable and unlikely to spread if caught early and treated aggressively.

Dental Disease: Drooling, open-mouthed breathing and bad breath can all be signs of dental disease, and bacterial infections in the mouth can spread to other vital organs, causing irreversible damage. These problems can be prevented by requesting regular dental exams from your vet, who should show you how to do home exams as well. Also, your cat should receive regular dental cleanings.

Excessive thirst (Polydipsia, or PD): This condition generally leads to Polyuria (excessive urination). If your cat is drinking and/or urinating too frequently, it maybe necessary to have her under go a physical exam with a blood panel to measure organ function.

Frequent vomiting: While a little vomiting is not uncommon and not necessarily a cause of concern, excessive vomiting, especially in kittens and older cats, may warrant a vet trip, particularly when there are multiple episodes within a few hours. If there are other signs of illness present, go see the vet. And be especially alert to the presence of blood, parasites or bile (indicated by a bright yellow color).

IF Your Cat Doesn't Eat for TWO Days Take Him to the Vet!

Unusual behavior: When an older cat yowls loudly and paces at night, it is possible she is suffering from either hyperthyroidism (also indicated by excessive thirst) or feline cognitive dysfunction, similar to Alzheimer's disease. An asthmatic cat may stand with her elbows out or breathe slowly and deliberately, while a cat with an upper respiratory infection will often breathe with her mouth open. These are just a few of the behavioral indicators that a vet visit may be in order.

HOW TO SAVE MONEY AT THE VET'S OFFICE

The absolutely best way to save money on a vet visit is to go sooner rather than later...What I mean is DON'T WAIT until your cat is wobbling and almost falling over to go to the vet. If you do you will spend \$100s (if not \$1000s) more in hospitalization, IV fluids & antibiotics, especially if you wait until the weekend.

Rule of thumb -- if a cat doesn't eat or drink water for two days take him to the vet no later than the morning of 3rd day. If the cat doesn't use the litter box or strains to pee -- take him to the vet!! Both of these can result in serious health issues such as a blockage that needs surgery since you waited to long to treat with antibiotics.

You know your cat, any unusual behavior usually requires a vet visit. Once you get there you can save money by questioning the vet. Don't feel guilty if you don't say "yes" to every test available.

You have to learn when to say "no" to the proposed tests, lab work, etc. Some vets, like many doctors today want to run every test available because they now have the tools to do it but you as the cat owner pay for these tests.

I always question (politely) the Vet, is the treatment going to be any different as a result of the test? ...And if so how? What will the test tell us anything that you don't already know?

For instance, ringworm is a fungus very common in the ground and picked up by kittens and puppies. Any good vet can tell by looking at the skin abrasion with a black light that it's ringworm. Most vets will say, let's do a scraping and see what it tells us. The culture takes two weeks to grow to tell you the cat has ringworm, meanwhile had you started the treatment based on the vet's observations your cat would already be 1/2 way to recovering. Even vets that want to do a culture will usually start the cat on the internal medicine and topical cream. I always skip the scraping and culture and just start the treatment, saving me lab costs.

Another way to save money is to question the antibiotics prescribed if it's new to you. For example, Covenia is a newer antibiotic that is one injection and lasts for two weeks. It's great for treating feral cats but it's expensive and is not recommended for many illnesses. One vet I use charges \$70 for a Covenia shot vs. \$23 for Baytril, a much more effective antibiotic in many cases that is administered once a day.

Develop a good line of communications with your vet. If you don't feel comfortable discussing different treatments with your current vet maybe it's time to shop around and find one you can talk to.

Another way to save money is to DO THE ANNUAL checkup but don't say yes to every vaccine the vet has to offer. Indoor cats do not need, FeLV, FIV, FIP (these two aren't even recommended but many vets do them) & rabies (unless required by your city). After the first FVRCP booster, cats need one every 3 years.

Do say yes to a blood panel when you first get your kitty maybe at year one as a base. But then turn them down until at least 3 years later, then every 3 years unless your cat is sick. If it's sick a blood panel is a good starting point to see what is happening to the liver, kidney...

Sadly, some illnesses the vet knows is fatal but they still suggest running tests and spending \$100s of dollars knowing that there is no viable treatment. Ask the vet to be honest with you. A good example of this is some cancers, the treatment can run into the \$1000s but it rarely extends the life by 6 months. Other cancers are treatable and will cost less if detected early.

My last suggestion on how to save money at the vets is to feed good quality food. Cats that eat quality meat protein food, no corn, no glutens, no meat-by-products don't get fat and don't develop all the problems associated with it. Feed wet food.

In Summary:

Choose a vet early, as soon as you adopt a pet.

Be sure it's one you can talk to and has fair prices.

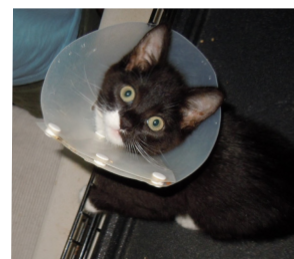
Don't wait until you have an emergency to find a vet.

Don't wait until cat is *really* sick to go to the vet.

Don't be afraid to question tests and treatment.

Do get an annual checkup for your pet.

Do feed good quality food.



VETS, BOARDING AND PET INSURANCE

OUR VETS:

Alicia Pet Care Center\

25800 Jeronimo Road Suite 100. Mission Viejo CA
949-768-1313

Mission Hills Pet Care Center

25222 Charlinda Dr, Unit C, Mission Viejo, CA
949-206-1988

Plaza Pet Hospital

3 Rancho Circle, Lake Forest, CA
949-581-7979

Talega Animal Hospital

995 Avenida Pico, San Clemente, CA 92673
949-581-7979

Lakeside Veterinary Hospital

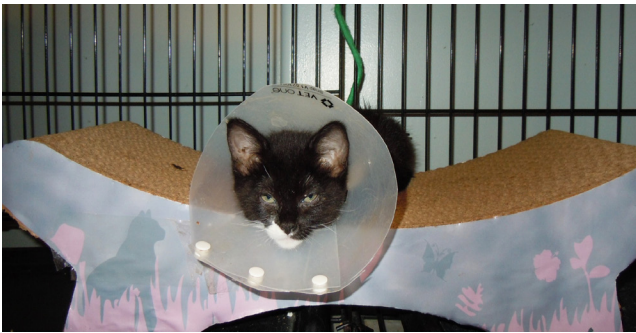
9924 Maine Avenue. Lakeside CA 92040
619-390-2342

All God's Creatures Hospital

616 Broadway, El Cajon CA 92031
619-489-3339

San Diego Affordable Veterinary Care

2860 University Ave, San Diego CA 92104
619-977-1114



EMERGENCY 24 HOUR (\$\$\$\$):

Animal Urgent Care of So Orange County

(next door to Mission Viejo Animal Shelter)
28085 Hillcrest, Mission Viejo, CA 92692
949-364-6228

VCA All-Care Animal Referral Center

18300 Euclid Street Fountain Valley, CA 92708
714-241-9001

Central Orange County Emergency Clinic

3720 Campus Drive #D, Newport Beach, 92660
949-261-7979

Blue Pearl Pet Hospital

1371 Reynolds Ave., Irvine, CA 92614
(949) 833-9020

CAT BOARDING FACILITY:

Cats Love Us (5 stars on Yelp.com)

Joyce & Don Jerome
27601 Forbes Road, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
949-582-1732
<http://www.catsluvus.com/>
Recommended by All of us, only boarding facility I would leave a cat.

RECOMMENDED VETS IN AREA:

We do keep a list of recommended vets from our own experiences and referrals from adopters.

This list is for guidance only and not an absolute guarantee that these vets are still excellent. Vet staffs change and we can't keep up with all the changes but it can be a starting point if you need a new vet.

When you adopt a pet it is important that you establish a relationship with a vet at the very beginning. You never know when you are going to need one.

We also have a list of **low cost Spay/Neuter** vets.

Please email info@southerncountiesrescue.org and ask for our list. Orange County and other shelters have low cost spay/neuter programs too, check with them.

PET INSURANCE:

We are frequently asked if we recommend insurance or not. Cost of vetting is going up faster than cost of medical for humans so it is something to consider. You can find reviews and comparisons online at cats.com and other websites. It varies among cities.

Some people set up a "pet savings account" and deposit money each month into it.

Another option is a CareCredit card, it has high interest rates but none if you pay off in 6/12 months

MetLifePetInsurance has a special for adopted pets posted on Petfinder, a free 30 day policy, with \$500 coverage. This is excellent to cover any illness as a result of stress in coming to a new home.

Call: MetLife-Pet Insurance - 855-270-7387, option 1 and ask for New Pet Adoption Policy. <https://www.MedLife.com>.

There may be better plans available but this will protect you while you do your research.

Favorite Cat Related Websites

Health, Food & Behavioral Issues

<http://www.tuftscatnip.com/> - This is an excellent newsletter that takes NO advertisement from makers of cat products, reviews products and discusses health & behavioral issues.

<http://www.icatcare.org> - The website of International Cat Care, a charity dedicated to promoting the health and welfare of cats through improved feline knowledge of cat owners.

<http://www.catinfo.org/> - Dr. Lisa Pierson DVM. Excellent discussions on cat nutrition, pilling cats, litter box issues, vaccines...

<http://www.petplace.com/> - Over 10,000 vet approved articles.

<https://cats.com/> - Cats.com rates food and other cat products, it also has articles of subjects like Pet Insurance. It has all pet food recall notices.

<http://www.catster.com/> - A free informative email newsletter with some good tips.

Cat & Other Animals for Adoption

<http://www.southerncountiesrescue.org/> - This is our website. It shows the cats we have for adoption in Orange County. It also has many articles under **RESOURCES** like Bottle Feeding, Finding your lost Cat...

<http://www.petfinder.com/> - This site allows you to search by zip code and animal breed.

<http://www.adoptapet.com/> - This site allows you to search by zip code and animal breed.

Shopping for Something Different & Great Food Prices

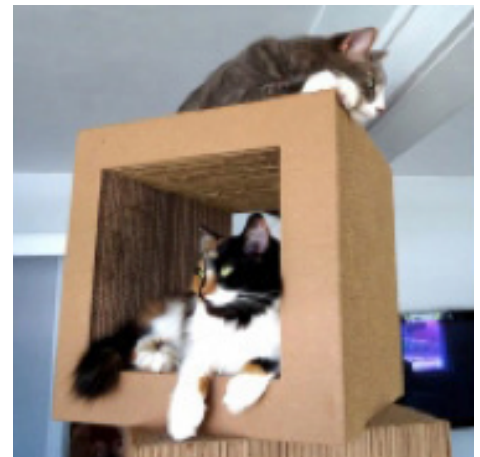
<http://www.hauspanther.com/> - cats + design website with links to really cool, often very modern cat things such as cat trees, beds...plus ideas on things to make for cats.

<https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/pets/> - Wide selection of quality products, reviewed by NYT.

<http://www.litter-robot.com/> - The only automatic litter box that really works, gets 4.2 stars based on Amazon 1919 reviews. It's expensive but if you want an automatic box this is the one to buy.

<http://www.chewy.com/> - Good prices online for quality pet food and includes free shipping. Beats any local price, obviously this can change. I have a standing order shipping every week to my door.

<https://www.etsy.com/> - search under cat toys, beds, cat fountains, scratchers...



ABOUT SOUTHERN COUNTIES RESCUE

Who We Are and What We Do.

Southern Counties Rescue is an all volunteer (no paid staff), non-profit, no-kill organization devoted to finding loving new homes for homeless cats and kittens in Imperial, San Diego and Orange Counties.

Founding members of SCR have been doing adoptions in Orange County for 20 years. In December 2011 SCR incorporated as its own 501c3. In January, 2023 SCR opened a chapter near Seattle WA, when two active members moved to Washington so now we can adopt out more kitties.

Many of our cats are rescued from high kill city shelters. right before they are scheduled to be euthanized. We also take in friendly mom with kittens born in backyards, kittens born in feral colonies, and cats abandoned on the streets to fend for themselves. We are committed to making a difference in the lives of these animals. Every year Southern Counties Rescue rescues and places around 300 cats and kittens in the San Diego – Orange County – Washinton areas.

Southern Counties Rescue does not have a shelter. All of our rescued cats and kittens are fostered in private homes where they are cared for by our volunteers until they are adopted. Dedicated volunteers care for bottle babies, moms with litters, cats that need socialization, and sick and injured animals.

Kittens are offered for adoption no earlier than eight



weeks of age, with a minimum weight of two pounds and healthy. Potential adopters are screened for suitability. Cats and kittens are vaccinated, dewormed, microchipped, tested for feline leukemia (FeLV) and feline AIDS (FIV), and are spayed or neutered before going to their new homes.

Southern Counties Rescue holds Saturday adoptions at Pet Stores in So. Orange County. Cats and kittens are also home shown to potential adopters.

In addition to rescuing and placing cats and kittens in need, Southern Counties Rescue is equally passionate about reducing the number of strays and unwanted kittens by supporting all spay/neuter programs and educating the public on the need to fix their own pets and any cats that wander into their yards, especially if they are feeding them.

Unfortunately, we receive many more calls for help than we can answer. Volunteers are always needed to foster abandoned cats and kittens, staff adoption events, help with transportation, fundraising, assisting with web postings, paperwork or publicity and for numerous other jobs.

Donations are also welcomed to help defray the cost of rescuing injured cats and to pay the cost of basic veterinary care. The average cost of each cat we rescue is much higher than our minimum adoption donation, so we rely on donations to let us save more animals.

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO RESCUE. SOME DONATE THEIR TIME AND HOME, OTHERS DONATE MONEY TO PAY FOR THE VETS AND FOOD OF THE FOSTER CATS. WE COULDN'T DO IT WITH OUT EVERYONE'S HELP.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT US AND DONATE PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
SOUTHERNCOUNTIESRESCUE.ORG**

Please mail donations to:
Southern Counties Rescue
PO Box 1399
Brawley, CA 92227



venmo

Venmo - @SouthernCountiesRescue

THE POCKET BELOW HOLDS YOUR ADOPTED CATS PERSONAL RECORDS





THANK YOU FOR ADOPTING

View our kitties for adoption at: <http://www.southerncountiesrescue.org>

Southern Counties Rescue Inc
Serving Orange, Imperial & San Diego Counties
PO Box 1399, Brawley, CA 92227
info@southerncountiesrescue.org

Price \$20.00

Visit us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCountiesRescue>