

CATIFY YOUR HOME

IDEAS FOR EVERYONE, EVEN IF
YOU'RE NOT THE HANDY TYPE



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Introduction

Our guide will help you create the perfect indoor haven for your cat – regardless of how much inside space you have!

Many cat parents have safety concerns about letting their cats roam freely outdoors. Concerns about traffic, dogs or wild animals, fighting with other cats or picking up diseases inform their decision to keep their cats indoors.

People who live in apartments also often have no choice but to keep an indoor only kitty, and then there are those cats who are deaf or have other health issues.

So, as you can see, there are many reasons why people choose to keep their cats indoors. While the indoor/outdoor cat debate is one that rages on, our aim is to educate anyone who reads this on ways to make the perfect indoor cat haven.



Saying that, most homes are not necessarily the ideal habitat for cats, so it is up to us to cater for their specific needs – it isn't enough just to provide food, shelter and love. We must create an enriching home that stimulates and challenges them so that their basic needs are met. This is so important because, while indoor cats will adapt to their environment, they can fall victim to physical or emotional problems associated with boredom and lack of activity.

But the good news is that with a little planning and care you can make a wonderful indoor home for your cat and our guide will give you some great tips! So, without much further ado, let's help you make the perfect indoor home for your cat!

Use Your Vertical Space

Many cats love to hang out up high. From above, they can survey their territory and feel safe from whatever's going on below. A big part of providing an enriching environment for your cat is having high perches available, and it's even more important to do this when you are working with a small amount of floor space.

The creation of vertical space is HUGE for cats. It opens up their space, makes it easier for cats in a multi-cat household to get along as they can “time-share” their space/assets because there are enough spots to go around, and it lets them survey their world from on high.

It also encourages exercise by giving them somewhere to jump to. There are many awesome (and attractive!) ways to create vertical space for your cats: amazing cat trees, cat shelves at intervals on the walls to provide a catwalk for your cat to hang out on and enjoy the peace near the ceiling, create a “cat highway”.



Scratching posts/areas

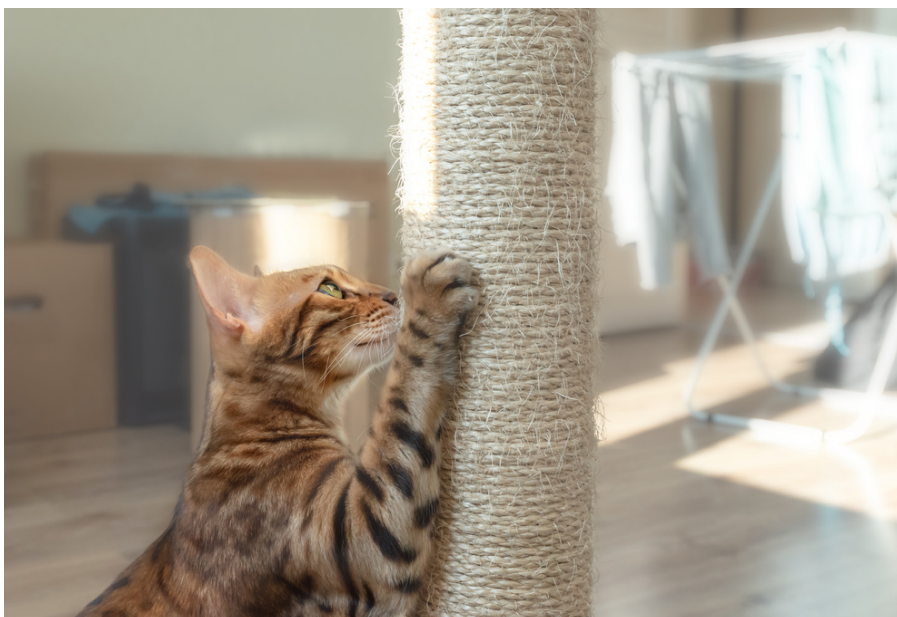
Did you know that cats need to scratch to maintain their claws? and mark their territory and unfortunately if you don't make provisions for this, they will scratch other things around your home, like your furniture or curtains! Scratching posts should be as tall as possible to allow your cat to fully stretch out and scratch. If space is very limited you could attach scratching panels to your walls at an appropriate height. Some cats however prefer to scratch horizontal surfaces so you should try a variety of scratching areas for your kitty.

If your cat loves clawing things despite your providing ample scratching posts/areas, you could try Feliway (or any other pheromone spray), double sided tape, a scratching pad for the side of your sofa or speak to your veterinarian about other products or behavioural tricks you can try.

An important point on scratching and declawing. You should NEVER (never, ever, ever) declaw your cat. This is an unbelievably cruel practice and equates to someone cutting off your fingers at the first knuckle. Cat's paws are incredibly sensitive, and declawing will sadly leave your cat in lifelong pain and discomfort. It is barbaric and any true cat lover would never consider inflicting such a terrible fate on their cat.

There is always something you can do to deter or distract your cat's natural scratching instincts that does not involve declawing. You can also trim their claws (if you can't do this yourself, your vet can do this for you at your cat's next checkup. Read the [Humane Society's advice](#) on trimming your cat's claws.

And if you're in doubt about declawing, or someone tries to talk you into this, please just watch this [Jackson Galaxy](#) video first to learn the facts about what declawing entails (it's not just removing their claws!).



Make the Most of the Window Space

Cats love to watch what's going on outside, so maximize any window space you have for your kitty's enjoyment. Here are some ways to do that:

- Put a bird feeder outside if it's a first-floor window, and you have outdoor space available to you. Be sure not to put it too close to the window, or the birds might be scared off by your cat, but a bird feeder that is a bit away from the window can provide your cat with hours of entertainment, and the birds will be happy, too!
- Put a tall cat tree next to the window. If you don't have a window seat, you can place a tall, sturdy cat tree. This will allow your cat to get up high enough to see what's going on outside, and there will be scratching space available if the excitement triggers a need to scratch.



Essential Play Time

Cats need ample time to play and cats that live in small spaces are especially in need of routine playtime with you. Every cat is an individual, but most prefer toys and games that are as close to the natural hunting experience as possible. Toys that move randomly are great; those that are motionless and left lying around soon become predictable and boring.

Toys made from fur material or feathers that are of a similar size to prey animals are popular, as are those impregnated with catnip – a herb that cats can find particularly attractive. All should be stored away and brought out from time to time to maintain their novelty.

Many cats enjoy retrieval games and this can represent an opportunity for social contact as well as play.

Puzzle toys are great for provide interesting and enriching ways for your kitty to pass the time – you can fill them with kibble and leave them for your cat to figure out throughout the day.

Or help your indoor kitty hunt by splitting their daily kibble up into several servings and hiding them in bowls around the home. That way, your kitty can hunt them out throughout the day, providing them with mental stimulation and a tasty food treat as a reward!

Provide Privacy

It is important to find small spaces, nooks, and crannies for your cat to get into and hide, no matter the size of your home. Being able to take time out from social demands essential for your cat so you must find a way to create this for them. But the good news is, is that doesn't have to be difficult! You could make some space available under your bed, inside a closet or behind the sofa. Your cat should never be disturbed while using a private area unless you have any reason to believe that it may not be well. Cat's generally like cosy and warm so let that be your guide about the best place to locate their private hideaway.



Beds

We all know that cats spend most of their time sleeping so it makes sense to focus on what you can do to aid your cat's rest and relaxation time. Cats prefer warm places to sleep and many do like them to have a strong familiar scent of their human parents to give a sense of safety and security. Not all cats need the reassurance of your smell when they are resting so it's best to have a few sleeping locations around your house, ideally in quiet, warm and sunny spots around your house.

These don't have to be special cat beds and it could be your bed, a chair or sofa with a special warm blanket on it so that it feels like "their" spot. Make sure any bedding you provide is washable - but don't clean it too often (unless heavily soiled), as cats like having with a familiar scent! Radiator hammocks are also great for heat-seeking cats as they hook onto your radiator to enable them to gain the maximum benefit from the heat.

If you did want to buy a cat bed then it's position may be the key to its appeal! Think raised off the ground (many cats feel a little vulnerable sleeping on the floor), near a source of heat or a sunny spot. If your cat likes their own space then ensure their bed is in a quiet area away from thoroughfares. Those with three high sides that surround the cat will keep draughts away and give a sense of camouflage to avoid attracting attention (even a cardboard box with some cosy, thick bedding would also do the trick).



Your bed is potentially the ultimate delight for your cat – with the warmth of a duvet and a strong smell of you! This provides a tremendous sense of security and enables your cat to sleep deeply in the knowledge that they are safe. If your bedroom does become an important space it can also be a place of conflict if you have a multi-cat household as individual kitties compete for the best spot. Providing heated pads or raised cat beds in other bedrooms or even allocating space in your own room for such additions may go some way to finding a sensible compromise.



Litter trays

Litter trays are absolutely essential if you have an indoor only cat or if they have limited access to the outdoors. It is also highly recommended even if your cat is free to roam outside.

The position of the litter tray is important. It should be located in a discreet corner, away from food and water, full-length windows and busy thoroughfares. Your cats may see external doors and cat flaps as potentially dangerous places so locating them as far away as possible from these stressful areas would be ideal.

So, what is the gold standard when it comes to litter trays? One tray for every cat in your household, plus one extra ideally should be placed in different discreet locations away from food. This doesn't mean that each cat will automatically choose their own tray but it will give a general sense that there is plenty of choice. These trays can be covered or open but it is important that the areas they are located represent a place of safety where your cats don't feel vulnerable.

Regular cleaning regime is essential, removing faeces and urine soiled litter at least once a day and cleaning the entire tray weekly. Some cats find polythene tray liners unpleasant, particularly if they spend a lot of time scraping in the tray, as this could result in them getting their claws caught in the liner. Litter deodorants can also introduce a strong alien smell into the tray, so you may find your cat prefers a well-maintained tray without any added fragrance.



Social contact

Most cats enjoy the company of their own species, so if you're choosing to keep your cat indoors, it's best to have more than one. You can avoid any problems with fighting over resources like window spots, toys, climbing frames, etc by providing enough of these to keep both, or more, cats happy. It's also worth noting the importance of keeping an appropriate number of cats for the space you have available. For example, having 10 cats in a small two-bedroom apartment is not recommended and will cause a raft of problems for the cats and ultimately yourself.

Apart from this, making sure you have enough social contact with your cat is important – but it's equally important to note that the level will vary according to your cat's personality. It's best to allow your cat to dictate the level of interaction and to initiate most of the contact.

Predatory play, grooming and verbal communication are important social contact between you and your cat and can be better received than 'kissing and cuddling' – but again this depends on your cat's personality. Some cats also enjoy the company of dogs, so company can come in different forms!

Fresh air

And finally, don't underestimate the value of fresh air, particularly if there is a smoker in the house. Child locks or screens will not only keep your cat from falling out of the window, but also allow them to get some fresh air and enjoy the view without the risk of injury. This alone will carry challenging and interesting smells from outside and be a focus of attention for your indoor cat. Now, if you really wanted to super charge your cat's environment, the "cherry on the top" as it were (we understand these would not suit all homes), would be to invest in either/both:

Window Boxes

These are kits that fit your window like an air conditioner unit that allows your cats to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells. They'll also be able to enjoy the summer breeze or a lazy afternoon in the sun! Getting in the window box can become a wonderful hangout spot!



Catio/enclosed porch

These are real game changers! A catio is a space that you can make for cats (and which you can share with them) by enclosing your existing patio or creating an enclosure. Within it, you can offer great vertical spaces, wooden objects that they can scratch on, maybe a water feature, different grasses or other kitty-safe plants. Your cat can even



hunt the odd critter that makes its way inside the enclosure. Catios come in all sizes, pre-made or DIY versions, so whatever your budget or however much outside space you have, you can find one to suit you and your cat!

Conclusion

We hope you've found this brief guide useful and a source of inspiration for creating your perfect indoor kitty haven regardless of how spacious or cosy your home is! There is always a way to make the indoor space you do have the perfect space for your feline friend!

