

the kitten & cat manual

Adopt a Pet
Com

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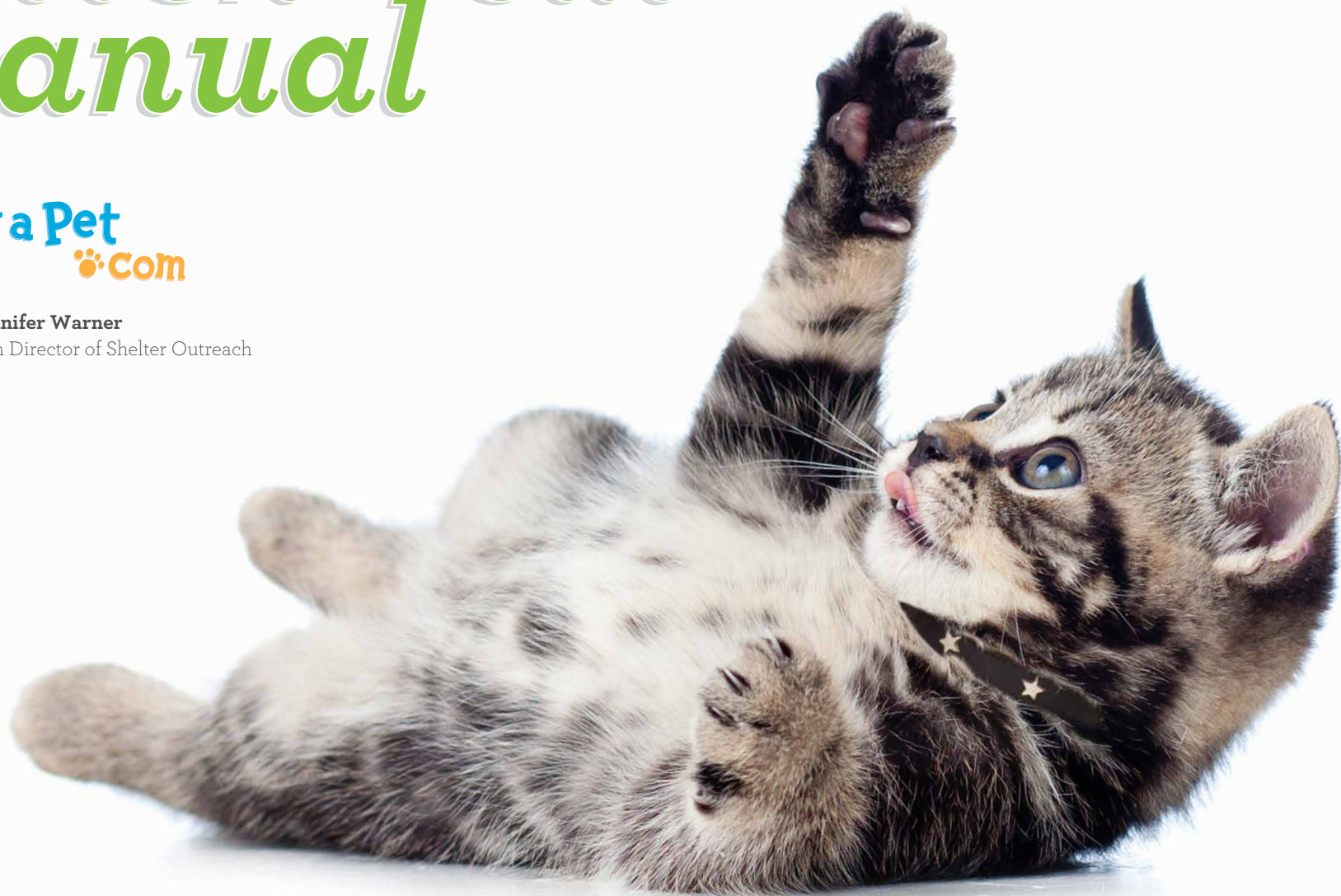


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Congratulations! You are likely reading this as the proud new adopter of a cat or kitten – or you are just about to become one! In this manual you'll find lots of helpful advice on how best to ease your new feline friend into his new home and keep him (and you!) happy for a long life together.

ch. 1

bringing your new cat or kitten home

There is a lot you can do in the first 24 hours to help your new feline housemate ease in to your home!

First, there's the matter of getting your kitty to your house in the first place: Unlike dogs, most cats do not enjoy traveling in a car, so you'll want to make sure they're as safe and secure as possible. It is safest to transport a cat inside a pet travel carrier, lined with an easily washable towel or a few sheets of newspaper. It is normal for cats to meow loudly while in a carrier or the car. Some cats relax with soothing music, or you may just need to sing along and hope you arrive quickly! This is important: Do not transport a cat loose in a car or try to hold them in your lap or next to you. They might panic, hurt themselves or you, and cause an accident. Or they may try to hide and get stuck under a seat, or worse, under the gas or brake pedal.

Once you all get safely home...

The “starter” room

To make your new cat's transition to your household as comfortable as possible, start off by limiting his or her access only to a single room. Select a quiet, comfortable area you can close off, such as your bedroom, away from the main foot traffic. Set it up with a litter box, bed, food and water. Some cats like a place to hide at first, so leaving the carrier in the room, or letting them hide in a closet, can help them feel secure and give them a base camp from which to explore when they're ready. It's completely normal for a cat to be scared in new surroundings (especially after a car trip or if they are he's coming from a shelter), and it may take a cat days or weeks to adjust to his new environment. If you are adopting an adult cat, be sure that this “starter” room has very secure window screens (strong enough that you can lean against them and they stay put) and/or that you keep the windows securely closed. More than once, a new kitty, even when quite happy in his new home, has pulled off a screen and gone missing! A cat outside a new home is very likely to become lost.

Once kitty has adjusted (meaning she seems relaxed and happy in her starter room), you can open the door and let her explore the rest of your home.

Important: If you have other pets, before you open the door, if you have other pets, see Meeting the Household, below.

If possible, make the starter room the permanent location of the litter box. (We've included a whole chapter devoted to proper selection and placement of the litter box a little later on in this guide.) If you plan on keeping the litter box elsewhere in the long run, you'll need to start with two litter boxes, both in the starter room. When kitty is ready to have the door opened, keep one litter box in the same location in the starter room, and put the 2nd litter box your preferred location. Once your cat is using the litter box in the new location, you can slowly, a foot or two a day, move the starter room litter box closer and closer to the other one. When they are next to each other, if desired, you can remove one box.

Meeting the household

First impressions are important! You're likely very excited to have your new cat meet everyone. But cats generally prefer to take things slowly, and too many new things at once can be stressful, and cause initial meetings not to go well -- and a bad first impression can be hard to undo.

Aim to introduce just one new thing at a day to your new cat, so your kitty doesn't feel overwhelmed. The first day, just getting used to the starter room is more than enough. It can be really hard (especially with family wanting to , but sometimes even the friendliest cat needs a few days with just one person at at time to feel safe in a new environment.

If you have other pets, don't introduce them to your new cat immediately. Follow the slow introduction steps we describe in Chapters 10 and 11. This will give your new cat time get to know and trust you, and let your other pets realize that they are still loved. It will take time for everyone to adjust, sometimes weeks or months, so don't be discouraged if they aren't best friends right away.

Tempting though it may be, it can be a big mistake to rush this process. The slow approach is well worth the extra time, and you ensure that your pets are all happy and comfortable in your home.

Going outside?

We prefer that domestic cats be kept as indoor-only pets. Some owners prefer to risk the dangers outside and let their cats roam freely. If that's you, please reconsider. There are many advantages to keeping your new cat indoors always — outdoor cats are exposed to disease, fleas, ticks, cat fights, being killed by dogs or wild animals, and being killed or severely injured by cars.

If you do decide to have an indoor/outdoor cat (and, again, we hope you won't), you must wait at least four weeks before allowing a new adult cat to go outside, to give her a chance to bond with your family and home. Don't let your new kitty go outside when you first bring her home. If your new cat goes outside too soon, she is very likely to become lost. Also, kittens should be kept inside at least until they are full-grown (around 12 months of age). Even if your new kitty cries at the door or window, please keep her inside! Your cat will adjust in time, and you are doing it for her own good.

If your adult cat goes outside, letting him out in broad daylight may somewhat reduce his risk of being killed by predators. To train your cat to come in at a set time every afternoon, set his one daily feeding time during his month indoors at the hour when you will want him to come inside, and continue to feed him (even if you're just putting out new dry food) at that same time, calling him to come in for his dinner. You can reward his coming in with treats as well to reinforce his behavior.

Letting a cat go outside “while supervised” does not make it safer. You cannot keep cats from darting up a fence or tree or off a balcony; they are much faster than you are. Your presence may or may not deter a hawk, owl, or other winged predator from attacking your cat - the smaller the cat, the greater this risk.

There is fencing designed for cats (with a special angled top) that can enclose a yard or smaller area. While that does help contain a cat and some versions can keep him safe from some predators, it doesn't protect from flying ones, and it can be a challenge to install and keep it both kitty-escape-proof and predator-proof. It is safer than letting your cat roam freely outdoors.

The only way to have a cat safely outside your home is on a secure cat harness and leash, or in a cat enclosure with a roof. There are amazing “catio” enclosures that you and your cat can safely enjoy together, from small window catios to giant screened in outdoor rooms!

Concerned that a cat can't be happy indoors? Be sure to read our “How to Keep Your Indoor Kitty Happy” chapter.

**Is it safe to
come out now?**



ch. 2

kitten socialization

Especially with younger kittens, but with older kittens too, how you interact and play with them can have a HUGE impact on their personalities and how they will interact with humans when they are adult cats.

It is natural for most kittens to figure out how to play with other cats/kittens and people by testing their boundaries: Can I jump on your head while you are sleeping? Can I bite your toes under the covers? Can I scratch or bite your hands if you use them to play with me? These behaviors may be “cute” when a kitten is tiny, but when they are adults ... not so much!

How can you help your kitten grow up to play nice with people and other cats?

1. Adopt a kitty friend for your kitten! Aim for one around the same age (ideally the same age or a few months older) with an equal energy level. Before adopting, if you can, spend time with potential adoptees to try to pick one that plays gently with you already. The kittens will play together and teach each other not to play or bite so hard that it hurts. They'll also have fun tiring each other out! You can find kittens for adoption near you at: www.Adopt-a-Pet.com



Kitty Tip: If adopting a second kitten isn't possible, give your kitten a toy stuffed animal similar in size, and lots of other stuffed toys that she can bite and wrestle with safely. It's not as effective as a live kitty playmate, but it helps.

2. Do not teach your kitten that your hands are toys.

Don't wiggle your fingers and allow her to attack your hand. Don't allow anyone else to, either!

3. Get a laser toy, a feather toy on a string, or any other super fun running-around toys that you can play without being too close to the kitten. A remote-control mouse is fun for both you! (Search YouTube.com for “kitten remote-control mouse” to see many adorable videos of kittens playing!) Get your kitten's energy out with three “remote” play sessions of five to 10 minutes every day. Tire your kitten out with fun!

Kitty Tip: Increase the frequency and intensity of your play sessions as she becomes an adolescent and matures into an adult kitty, and then taper down. Observe your kitty during each session, and the moment she starts to get slightly less interested in playing, stop before she's totally tired/bored with the game.

4. If your kitten starts to play roughly with any part of your body, IMMEDIATELY stop playing and walk out of room. If she's “attacking” you while you are sleeping, or resting, you may need to close her out of those rooms while you are doing those activities, until these steps start helping.

5. Pet your kitten only when she is super sleepy or eating. Kittens should learn that a human hand touch is soothing, not play.

ch. 3

how to keep your indoor kitty happy!

Keeping your kittens and cats indoors all the time is unquestionably the safest choice you can make for their well-being. They avoid being hit by cars, injuries from other animals, parasites, and life-threatening illnesses... the list of outdoor hazards is almost endless.

Keeping an indoor cat happy is just as important as keeping him safe! For pets, happiness is an integral part of their health, just as it is for people. There are many wonderful ways you can enrich their environment and their lives. Here are a few of our favorite fun ideas.

Adopt a kitty friend: Most cats are so much happier with a cat friend! If you think your cat doesn't like other cats, you might try fostering a few different (slightly smaller and opposite sex) cats. Often it's just a matter of a slow introduction and finding the right personality match. Find a cat or kitten to adopt near you using www.Adopt-a-Pet.com.

Daily exercise: Cats need to run, jump and chase every day. Wild cats have birds and bugs and other small animals to chase, but indoor kitties need you (or a kitty friend) to provide that kind of mental and physical exercise by playing with them every day. You may need to try lots of different toys till you find one that gets your cat going.

Variety is the spice of life: Wild cats don't chase the same bird day after day. You can make inexpensive cat toys by attaching almost anything to the end of a fishing line. Try crumpled-up paper balls, tin foil, plastic wrap, knots of yarn – of course, never leave these homemade toys out with them unsupervised. My cats are huge fans of a feather on a string and laser toys.

Climbing & hideouts: You don't need to buy carpet-covered cat trees, though cats generally love them. You can do an Internet search for “modern cat trees” and also “Ikea cat hacks” for some stylish and creative variations. Even in a tiny apartment you can get creative with arranging your couches and bookshelves to create climbing steps and high-up “hideouts” for your cat! Don't forget window perches, like a bookshelf or chair in front of a window – cats love to look out even if they can't go out.

You may ask, why not just build or purchase an outdoor cat enclosure? That's a great idea too! If you have a balcony, patio or yard, there are endless ways you can create a cat-proof enclosure where your cat can enjoy being outdoors safely. But before you invest a lot of time or money in one,

you may want to try a less expensive mesh outdoor cat tunnel first.... And if you follow the other tips above, you may find your cat is perfectly happy being an indoor-only cat without ever going outside.

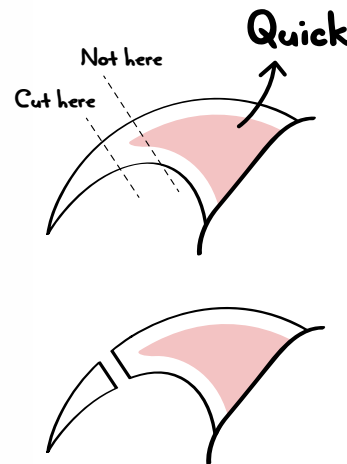


ch. 4

how to trim your cat's nails

Ideally, cat nail-clipping is something you start at very young age. Always try to make it as pleasant an experience as possible – often just doing a nail or two at a time will make it a painless and stress-free process. This gets them used to the sensation, and then, as they grow up, they continue not to mind having their nails trimmed.

If you've adopted an adult cat, and/or if you have never clipped your cat's claws, you may want to practice holding your cat's paws and extending their nails, before you try trimming them. Have your cat sit on your lap and gently touch their paws - you are not picking up their paws at this step, just touching them. You can make it extra enjoyable by rewarding your kitty with treats for each touch. Repeat daily for a week. Then try picking up each paw daily for a few days. Then, gently squeeze the paw: Using one finger on the top of a toe, and the other on the bottom (on the toe pad), gently squeeze until the claws extend, as in the photo below. Practice with each toe and give your cat lots of praise and treats!



When you can accomplish paw holding and nail extension with a relaxed cat, you can advance to using a pair of sharp human nail clippers, or cat nail trimmers, and actually trimming the tips off the nails. Some cats are more tolerant if you trim just one or two nails when they are sleeping, so you may want to break up your nail trimming into several sessions over several days to keep it as enjoyable as possible for both of you.

Dull blades can crush the nail, causing it to split and bleed. Speaking of bleeding, be sure to cut off only the tip of the nail. Take care not to damage the blood vessel and nerve endings, aka the quick, which is very painful and bleeds if cut. See photo for where the quick is located. It is pink and visible on clear or light colored nails. On dark nails, you have to estimate the location of the quick based on the curve of the cat's nail. Better to take off too little than too much!

If you make a mistake and cause bleeding, if you still have your cat in your control (many will bolt from the pain and hide) you can apply light pressure on top of where it is bleeding, or dab some styptic powder or corn starch to stop it.

If you have never trimmed a cat's nails before, ask a vet or experienced cat person to show you before you attempt it on your own. The nail "hook" is what tears up upholstery, so when it is removed, damage is greatly reduced.

Trimming nails as often as every other week will cause the quick to recede, and you can then trim the nails even shorter, for less scratching damage. If you have a cat that goes outside, do not trim their nails. An outdoor cat needs claws to escape danger by climbing a tree or to fight off an attacker.

ch. 5

train your cat to scratch in the right places

Cats have a natural desire to scratch. They like to scratch on sisal, rough carpet, burlap, cardboard, and other textured surfaces. You may be thinking, oh no, the couch! The carpet! The curtains! Cats do need guidance and training to learn to scratch where you want, not just where they want.

Styles of scratching posts: You want to provide your cat with scratching surfaces that are more appealing than the arm of your couch. Most cats like to scratch vertically, and many like to scratch horizontally. Before you bring home your new cat or kitten, you'll want to buy or construct (if you're handy) at least two scratching posts. They should have a desirable rough-textured scratching surface.

Vertical scratching posts should have a sturdy enough base so as not to tip over when a cat is vigorously scratching on them, and tall so your cat can completely stretch up with his front paws, which is typically three feet high or taller, depending on the length of your cat. Horizontal scratching surfaces work well too, like the inexpensive cardboard ones. They should also be big enough to allow your cat to stand on them, stretch, and scratch.

Many cheap store-bought posts are not big or sturdy enough, and are covered with soft fabric. Don't skimp on your cat's scratching posts, or your cat may decide the curtains are a lot more fun!

Location of scratching posts: Place one scratching post where the cat is already clawing or likely to claw, such as the side of the couch, and another close to where he or she normally sleeps (some cats like to stretch and scratch when they first wake up). With a young kitten or a new cat, place his on or next to the new scratching post and gently move his or her paws in a scratching motion. This will scent the posts and encourage exploratory clawing. (If your cat objects, you can also scratch the post with your own fingernails, the noise and motion will encourage them to do the same.)

Positive reinforcement: When your kitty uses the post, reinforce this behavior with praise and even treats, but be careful not to startle or frighten her. Make the post fun! If your cat likes to chase toys, toss or drag them over the post. For kittens and cats 6 months and older, you can sprinkle catnip on the post, too. Younger kittens aren't typically interested in catnip until they are older.

Deterrents: If she claws your furniture, never discourage her with physical force. Spraying room-temperature water from a squirt gun or spray bottle at your kitty (aim only at her back) is often successful as a deterrent. While you're training her, you may need to cover upholstery with plastic, double-sided tape, tin foil, or other protection to discourage scratching.

Patience: Figuring out what kind of post and locations your cat likes best can take time. Sometimes impatient and/or uninformed owners don't realize this, and decide to declaw their cats - when all they needed to do was try a few more kinds of posts, locations, and give their cat more time and training. See the next chapter for more about declawing.

Soft nail caps: Another option (and good while they are learning) is soft vinyl nail caps for cats, available online and at most pet supply stores. These caps are glued over the tips of a cat's newly-trimmed nails. They're available clear and in fun colors too! The nail caps allow cats to scratch naturally without harming furniture. Each application lasts about four to six weeks.



ch. 6

declawing

Declawing is the permanent surgical removal of a cat or kitten's claws. Many pet owners are unaware that, in order for the nails not to grow back, the operation is actually 10 to 18 amputations, removing the end bone from each of the cat's or kittens toes! If that made you think "ouch!" you already have an idea of how painful that is for a kitten or cat.

A feline's claws are attached by powerful ligaments and tendons so they can extend and retract. Those tendons, ligaments, as well as the skin and nerves (and often the pads of the paw) are cut to remove the entire end toe bone, as the claw grows out of tissue within the end bone. The operation, in veterinary terms, is called an onychectomy. There is another operation called a tendonectomy, in which the vet severs the tendons that extend the cat's claws. Both are painful, unnecessary operations, with a good chance of serious life-long medical complications. Most veterinarians and veterinary associations do not recommend performing onychectomy or tendonectomy on cats. In fact, declawing

is painful enough to be considered animal cruelty in many countries and a growing number of US cities, where the procedure has been outlawed.

Why would anyone want to declaw their cat?

Cats do have a natural desire to scratch. Scratching exercises and stretches their body from the tips of their nails up through their shoulders and back. In nature, wild cats whose claws aren't trimmed keep their nails from growing into the pads of their feet by scratching rough surfaces, which removes the longest layers. Scratching also creates a visual and scent territorial marker on the scratched surface.

Though humans have domesticated cats, the desire to scratch remains. If you don't provide your cat or kitten with enough appealing scratching posts, along with redirection training if needed (as explained in the previous chapter), your cat will still need to scratch. She will seek out materials that remind her of rough tree bark, which can include the upholstery on your couch! A frustrated pet owner might consider declawing, not realizing the dark side, and the pain-free humane alternative of scratch training, and/or applying vinyl nail caps to make her scratching destruction-free.

The dark side of declawing includes...

Litter box issues. When a kitten or cat is declawed, they often wake up with gauze strips in each toe's incision - that hurts, especially if they try to dig as they do naturally before they go to the bathroom. The gauze is a drain to help the deep incisions heal with a decreased chance of abscess infections. Some vets use surgical glue; others use stitches. So that the kitten won't rip out the painful drains, stitches, or glue with their teeth, or lick the wounds (high infection risk), the kitten must wear an e-collar - a plastic cone that looks like a small lampshade, tied tightly around their neck. That makes it hard for her to get in and out of a box, especially if she's a kitten. In addition, to avoid litter getting into and infecting the wounds, the vet will instruct the pet owner to only use shredded newspaper in the litter boxes. Because of the pain, your vet may give

your cat pain medication, which can cause drowsiness, disorientation, and nausea. Especially since kittens are the most often declawed (the operation can be even more dangerous for adults because of hemorrhaging), the pain, e-collar, medications and paper litter often all contribute to a life-long aversion to going in a litter box.

Biting. When kittens discover they can no longer use their claws for stability when jumping or climbing away from something fearful, they will use their next line of defense: biting. Declawed kittens may become aggressive and unfriendly cats. Cats in pain will often withdraw, hide, and not want to interact with you or other pets. Since cats can't talk, and are historically stoic or reclusive when in pain, some pet owners who have declawed their cats claim their cats are just fine. But studies have shown that declawed cats are significantly more likely to have litter box issues and biting issues. [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onychectomy>] That is not just fine for most cat owners!

Medical complications. Amputating all of your cat or kitten's toes carries a risk of complications that last well beyond the day of surgery. These include: hemorrhaging, infection, abscess, claw regrowth, - often deformed and growing into the pad, causing more pain and abscesses - limping, permanent limping, chronic pain, bladder inflammation due to the pain, stress and litter box aversion. [Source: American Veterinary Medical Association: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Backgrounders/Pages/Welfare-Implications-of-Declawing-of-Domestic-Cats-Backgrounder.aspx>]

There is no way to know how much pain your cat or kitten will be enduring for the rest of their life if you have them declawed. Please, don't declaw your cat! Instead, humanely train them to scratch where you want, and use vinyl nail caps instead.

ch. 7

litter box basics

Cats can be picky about cleanliness, location, and type of litter. Remember this, or your cat may choose to do her business in another spot in your house. To avoid cat litter box issues, below is some easy-to-follow litter box advice.

Choose the right style of litter box

Start out simple with your new cat. Avoid covered boxes, lidded boxes, fancy rims – get a simple plastic litter box available at any pet supply store. You can “upgrade” later if you desire, adding the fancy box as a second box and only removing the first box after the new box has been used for at least a week.

Select a big box

Ten out of ten cats agree: bigger is better when it comes to the preferred size of their litter box! Humans may prefer a smaller box, but cats seem to want one thing: room! Room to turn around, to dig, to comfortably stand up, squat, or put their paws on the edges and stand while they do their business. Then they want plenty of room to dig, dig, dig and make sure it’s completely covered!

Location matters!

Choose a quiet, easily accessible spot away from the food dish. Humans often want to hide the litter box in a closet or the far corner of the garage, but be aware that cats need easy access and are sensitive to odors. If you make it too hard (or trap the smell inside a closet), they might choose to go in another, better-smelling, easier-to-access location even if there’s no litter box there. In a large house, consider multiple locations. Once you pick a spot, don’t change it – that will only cause confusion and unwanted cat litter box issues. See the paragraph on litter box moving in the “Starter Room” section of our first chapter before you move your litter box.

A practical word about how much litter to add

Start with enough litter to fill the pan two to three inches deep. Check the package for specific recommended levels. Deeper litter means it’s less likely the cat will dig to the bottom and therefore make it easier for you to clean, but since you should dump and scrub your litter box regularly (see next paragraph), that’s more costly – and you’ll want a box with three high sides to keep deep litter inside the box as much as possible.

Clean often and dispose of litter properly

Remove both liquid and solid waste daily, and dump and replace litter as directed on the package – usually once a month. It’s a good idea to thoroughly wash your cat’s litter box each time you replace the litter. Use warm water and a mild soap, then rinse well. Avoid products containing ammonia, because it causes some cats to avoid the box, and may also intensify smells.

Box liners may seem like a good idea, but keeping them clean can be a challenge. Some cats shred them when they dig, making monthly or bi-monthly dumping and washing an easier and more economical choice.

Do not flush used litter, as even flushable litter can harm plumbing. And don’t use it as fertilizer; it will attract flies and other cats. You can use paper lunch bags as small biodegradable cat litter trash bags, and throw them in your trash or where directed by your city ordinances or building.

Switching litter

If new cat litter smells or feels different, your cat may reject it. Switch gradually, starting with two-thirds old and one-third new, gradually increasing the new over as you scoop out the old, until its time for a complete change after one month. If changing to a very different type of litter, like the BREEZE Litter System which is paper pellets in a special litter box, visit www.breezeforcats.com for additional litter box advice.

How many litter box?

If you have multiple cats, animal behaviorists recommend multiple litter boxes (one box per cat plus one additional box). Some cats will not use litter used by another cat.

If you have trouble with your cat NOT using the litter box, see our next chapter about Litter Box Issues.

ch. 8

litter box issues

Litter box issues are among the most frustrating behaviors for a cat owner. If only cats could talk to tell us why they aren't using their litter box!

There are so many reasons cats completely stop or won't consistently use their litter box. It can take some detective work to figure out the reason or reasons, and the cure or cures. This chapter will give you a step-by-step process to figure out and fix the problem. Many cat owners have used these steps to solve litter box problems with many cats, from young kittens to seniors. Litter box issues are one of the most common reasons cats are surrendered to shelters, but it doesn't have to be that way. Nine steps are described below in detail – don't be overwhelmed! Often it only takes finding the right step to get your cat going back in the litter box again.

To make these steps easier to understand, we'll call your litter box-avoiding cat Kitty. These steps assume you know for a definite fact that Kitty is choosing to go outside the litter box – not just missing and hitting the floor beside the box or wall by mistake. Many litter boxes are simply too small or too low-sided, and owners don't understand that is the cause. If your cat is going right next to the litter box, try a much bigger box or plastic storage bin with high sides and a low cutout doorway so he or she can easily get in and out.

Kitty Tip: Cats can be sensitive and affected by your mood. They might not show it in a way you understand, but if you are stressed or unhappy when you are cleaning their litter box or otherwise, Kitty will pick up on that--and that may be why he is avoiding the litter box. Can you change your mood? Sometimes buying a pretty new litter box and scented litter makes you feel better and will help Kitty start using it again - though you'll want to switch the litter type gradually over a few weeks. Also, as Kitty gets back on track, don't forget to lavishly praise him each time he gets it right and reward him with his favorite treat right after you see him using his box.

These steps assume you know litter box math for multiple cats: each cat should have his own litter box plus one extra, so 2 cats = 3 boxes, 3 cats = 4 boxes. This is something to consider before adding an additional cat: do you have enough space for enough litter boxes!

Step 1. Clean up

Cat urine is one of the most difficult smells on the earth to remove. To add to the challenge, cats have an extraordinary sense of smell and may continue to go in the same spot if they can smell that they've gone there before. But it can be done! Remove, sterilize, and store (or throw out) any items Kitty urinated or defecated on outside the box. If Kitty went on more permanent items like your front door or wall-to-wall carpet, thoroughly clean the entire area and soak with an enzyme-based pet cleaner for 24 hours. If you can't close Kitty out of that room, keep him away from the previously soiled area the entire time you are trying the steps below by covering the area with a large cat-proof item, like a plastic tarp.

Step 2. "Brand new"

The easiest and fastest thing you can try is adding another brand-new litter box, with all-fresh litter, in a new location. Put this box as close as you can to the spot where Kitty was most often eliminating inappropriately. This might be right next to your shower if he was using the bath mat, in your closet, on the couch, under a window or in a doorway.

Monitor Kitty for one full day.

Did that stop Kitty from going outside the box? Great! Keep it there for one full week or as long as it would usually take for your kitty to go outside his box. If you can keep the litter box in the new location with that kind of litter, your outside-the-box problem may be solved. What if the new location is not where you want a litter box? Gradually – just one foot a day – move it to where you want it.

If Kitty resumes urinating or defecating outside the litter box, move it back to the location where he was using it. You may need to keep a litter box in that location, or if you can't, keep it there for a few weeks, then move it one foot, and keep it there for a week, and move it one foot each week.

If you reach the point where Kitty is using one of two adjacent boxes, keep the second box there for one month. After one month, you can remove the second box – but be aware, even some single cats need more than one litter box.

Step 3. Medical

If the “brand-new” solution didn’t fix your problem in one day, you should take Kitty to your veterinarian ASAP to rule out any medical causes. Often cats will stop using their box to communicate that they aren’t feeling well or are in pain. Here are the steps most vets will recommend:

1. A urinalysis to check for infection.
2. A urine CULTURE for elevated bacteria.
3. Blood panel or other tests for illnesses.
4. Medication to relieve anxiety.

Step 4. Litter box preferences

After your vet has ruled out immediate medical causes, and while you’re waiting for the culture results to come back, you can start the process of figuring out if the problem is the litter box location, type or depth of litter, cleanliness, or style of box. Kitty may have a particular preference!

In the order listed below, try each of these six options for three days each. Add the next option after three days if the previous step didn’t get Kitty going in his boxes 100% of the time. If you achieve a successful combo, keep it up! This takes time, but each option or combination of options could be the key to your success.

1. Cleanliness: Keep all boxes hospital clean for three days. Dump all litter out daily, scrub with a cat enzyme cleaner (or use a brand-new box), replace with 100% clean new litter. Some cats are super clean and don’t want to use a box once it has been soiled.
2. Style: add another new litter box, as big as possible, uncovered, with the lowest sides possible.
3. Type: Fill new box with a different type of litter – try unscented non-clumping litter if you weren’t using that.
4. Soil: Replace new box litter with plain sterilized potting soil. Make sure it is free of fertilizers or any additives that could be toxic.
5. Depth: Add more soil to new box and litter to original box to make it deeper. Some cats want to dig down first.

Step 5. Location and Quantity

Try putting six new litter boxes out in six different locations. You don’t have to buy six new permanent boxes, you can use the disposable cardboard litter boxes sold in packs at pet supply stores. This is a temporary test to see if something in the two locations you tried previously is scaring or stressing Kitty so he doesn’t want to go there all the time. If you find Kitty is using one or more boxes and not going outside the box, after one week remove one he’s using the least. If you’re still okay, then remove one a week until you are down to the maximum number you can tolerate. If Kitty has an accident, then replace the last one you removed. You may need to combine this with keeping all the boxes super clean for it to work long-term.

Step 6. Stress

Medical issues are the most common reasons cats go outside their box. Next are stress and anxiety (territorial or other source) reasons. Kitty could be upset over a change in his routine, by someone or something new in the house, or something you can’t figure out! Whatever the cause, you can try these stress relievers:

1. Feline herbal remedy (such as Rescue Remedy). Effects are immediate. Put it on Kitty’s paw so he’ll lick it off, and put the recommended dose in his drinking water too.
2. Synthetic feline hormone plug-ins (such as Feliway) in every room. Not cheap, but often more effective than spray or collar versions.
3. Vet-prescribed kitty anti-anxiety medications
4. Soothing music, like a classical or easy-listening radio station.

Step 7. When left alone

If he only does it while you are gone, it might be your absence that is causing the stress. Kitty may feel less stressed in a smaller, secure space. If you have a comfortable well-ventilated, heated/cooled bathroom, laundry room, or other kitty bathroom-proof room, close Kitty in that room with a litter box, food, water and a bed

every time you go out. If you don’t have a suitable room, you can use an extra large dog crate or a kitty habitat. Try that for a week every time you go out to give it enough time to see if it helps. You can give Kitty a “treat” of canned food when you close him in there to make it more enjoyable. Use the above four stress relievers as well.

Step 8. Scent and Territory

What are you using to clean up your Kitty’s messes? If there’s a smell Kitty was trying to cover and it is not removed, he may continue to go on that spot. Does Kitty go on the door, on the rug by the door, or under a window? It could be anxiety-driven territorial marking. Try blocking off where Kitty can see/hear/smell any other cats or dogs outside.

It’s difficult to get the smell of cat urine out of household items – finding a product that works for your surfaces can take many tries. If a pet enzyme-based cleaner isn’t working, a solution of biological laundry detergent with water, soaking the area for 24 hours, and then flushing it with water may work. So can strong sunlight. With carpets, often the only solution is to remove them.

After you’ve cleaned all the areas where your cat has gone, gently rub a soft cloth over his cheeks, neck, and bottom, then rub the cloth where he went to the bathroom and leave the cloth there. This spreads the cat’s pheromones and scent onto that surface and will reduce Kitty’s need to put his scent there himself.

Step 9. Bad memories

Some cats have a painful association with going inside a box; declawed cats who tried to dig with wounded paws or cats who had a painful urinary infection may associate litter boxes with pain. So if all the above fails and Kitty is not using the box at all, or only partially using it, here’s what you can try as a last resort.

1. Close Kitty in the bathroom or kitchen, with his food, water, bed, and a new clean litter box with fresh litter. You may need earplugs if Kitty meows to be let out – you’ll need to be strong and be prepared to keep Kitty in there for at least a few days for this to work.

2. Cover the floor with newspaper – every square inch! If Kitty goes in the tub, put the newspaper in there. Most cats not using the litter box will go to the bathroom in one location on the floor. (If your cat does use the litter box, you can keep him in the bathroom for another full day, then try letting him out while leaving the box and newspaper there. If the out-of-the-box behavior outside the room continues,
3. Gradually pick up the newspaper where the cat is not going to the bathroom (one or two sheets removed a day).
4. When you are down to two sheets on which Kitty is going regularly, take a sheet that has some urine on it and put it on top of a flat piece of cardboard box, or on a cookie sheet. Take up the other sheet off the floor, so there is only newspaper only on top of the box/tray, and none on the floor.
5. If Kitty continues to go on the paper on the box/tray, try a brand-new low-sided uncovered litter box (so it won't smell anything like litter) in the same spot, and put a sheet of the urine scented newspaper in it.
6. If Kitty goes in the low-sided box, the next day, try putting a handful of a new kind of litter in it. Use litter that doesn't smell anything like his old litter. So if he was using clay litter, try the pine or ground-up corn litter. If he goes back to using the floor, take a step back to the newspaper, and then try a handful of sterilizing potting soil.
7. If Kitty goes in the box with the litter or soil, you can now open the door and let Kitty have access back to the house. If you want to move the litter box, leave the new litter box in the same location in the bathroom/kitchen for at least two weeks, then move it one foot a day to your preferred location.

Often with these seven steps above you can persuade a cat to graduate to a real litter box with litter, but sometimes you may have to stick to newspaper or dirt. It's better than your _____ (insert where your cat was going before here)!

If at any point during the re-introduction process Kitty reverts to going on the uncovered floor, do not panic. An accident or two may happen. But if it's more than twice, you should take a step or two back and proceed more slowly. If Kitty was really traumatized, it can take weeks. But a few weeks in a bathroom, while not fun, is worth the chance of getting Kitty over his trauma and back to using a litter box.

With patience, deductive powers and our suggestions, we believe Kitty will be using his litter box very soon.



ch. 9

tips to stop spraying

Did you adopt a new cat and discover that he or she is spraying? Perhaps your current cat suddenly started? Figuring out why a cat is spraying (territorially using urine to mark a surface) can take quite a bit of detective work, since, unfortunately, cats don't speak human!

Spraying once or twice a year isn't cause for concern, although it's not much fun to clean up. But if your cat sprays more than once a week, you have a behavior that could soon become a hard-to-break habit. But don't worry: just read on for our step-by-step tips for stopping your cat from spraying.

You may wonder how can you tell the difference between spraying and a cat who is going to the bathroom outside the litter box. Spraying (by a male or female cat) is when they "spray" their urine onto a surface – typically a vertical surface, while standing straight up. So if you find urine on a surface at the height of your cat's nose, you can be pretty sure he or she is spraying. BUT sometimes they will spray by squatting too, so if you find the urine on a horizontal

surface, you can't assume it's not spraying. In either case, you can follow the steps below, and those outlined in the previous chapter, to help stop it.

1. Spaying or Neutering

Spraying is often a hormonal response, and spaying or neutering can reduce or eliminate this response, at any age. But the younger the cat is when fixed, the less likely he is to spray at a later age. The American Veterinary Medical Association supports "pediatric" spay/neuter, which means spaying or neutering as early as eight weeks of age, as studies have shown no adverse effects from altering cats at that young age and many benefits, including reduced likelihood of spraying. It's important to spay or neuter your cat no matter what their age, of course. Please note that, for cats older than six months of age, it may take four to six weeks after the surgery before you see a change in spraying behavior.

2. Veterinary checkup

It is very important to rule out a possible medical cause for your cat's spraying. Even a previously healthy cat can develop an infection. One of the most common ways for a cat to try to communicate that he is unhappy (or uncomfortable) is by urinating outside his litter box. Ask your veterinarian to do BOTH types of urine-specific tests: a urinalysis for infection and a urine CULTURE for bacterial overgrowth. Medical treatment is often the cure for this spraying cause.

3. Routine

Did something change in your cat's routine? Is he newly adopted, did you get another new pet, did someone move in or out, did you get a new job or change your schedule, change litter brands, or even rearrange or get new furniture? Change often stresses cats, and spraying can be one way they show their stress. Giving your kitty time to adjust to changes and resuming a routine are often the solutions for this spraying cause. See also "stress" below.

4. Territory

If a new cat moves in next door, or a new person (like a baby) moves into your home, your cat may spray to

mark territory. If the suspected cause is "intruders" like neighborhood cats outside your home, block access to where the cat is seeing/smelling them – lock them out of that room, close the window shades, install a humane motion-activated "scarecrow" sprinkler to keep them away from your home. If the "intruder" is inside your home, see "stress" below.

5. Stress

Spraying a calming synthetic cat hormone (such as Feliway) all over and around where the cat has been spraying may be the fix for this cause. Some brands offer plug-in versions that work well for small spaces, like a single room – or you can put a plug-in in every room! Veterinarians can also prescribe anti-stress medication that can help de-stress your cat so he stops spraying, giving you time to clean and get him back on his routine as a permanent spraying fix if stress is part of or the total cause.

6. Smells

Cats are very sensitive to smells, and your cat may be spraying to cover up an unwanted smell. This is common when the cat is spraying on the trash can, in the bathroom, on a particular carpet that may have an odor embedded in the fibers. Removing the "smelly" object to a place the cat can't get to is one solution. Soaking it with cat urine enzyme cleanser or bleach (if it's bleach-safe) is another.

Kitty Tip: Soak Kitty's fabric collar in his sprayed urine, let it dry, and put it back on Kitty, so everywhere he goes, he will smell his own scent and will not feel he has to spread it by spraying.

7. New pet in home

This is a combination of change in routine, sharing a territory, stress, and new smells! Try using a combination of all the above, and give the pets separate time in their own rooms and separate litter boxes that are all their own.

If none of the above tips help, we suggest following the step-by-step confinement method that we outlined in our previous chapter on litter box issues.

ch. 10

introducing a new cat or kitten to your cat(s)

So, you've adopted a new cat or kitten and want to know how to best introduce him or her to other cats in your home? Depending on their age and personalities, it may take days or months to fully integrate your new cat or kitten with your family pets. Below are some guidelines and helpful tips to get a new feline friendship off to a good start. (We use the word cat below, but you can substitute kitten if that applies.)

Generally it's believed that the easiest introduction is when the new cat is younger, smaller, and the opposite sex, but it really depends on the personalities and experiences of the felines involved. It's essential that all cats to be introduced have been neutered or spayed, ideally two to four weeks before the introduction, so the hormones levels have time to subside.

Step 1. Isolation

Confine the new cat to one room with his litter box, food, water, and a bed. Feed your current cat(s) and the newcomer on either side of the door to this room. Don't put the food so close to the door that the cats are too upset by each other to eat. This will help to start things out on the right foot by letting the cats associate something enjoyable (eating!) with each other's presence. Gradually move the dishes closer to the door until the cats can eat calmly while directly on either side.

If you have adopted the new cat from an environment (like a shelter) where it was exposed to sicknesses he could be incubating, follow the recommendations of your vet for the duration of this isolation. Typically, for upper respiratory infection, the most common illness seen in newly-adopted cats, the cat should be isolated for 10 to 14 days. That may seem like a long time, but in addition to keeping your resident cat healthy, the new cat will have a chance to adjust to his/her environment's sounds and smells. The chances that the first face-to-face introduction with your resident cat(s) will go well are improved – which is very important!

Step 2. Scent/Sight intro

After the 10-to-14 day isolation period, and your new cat is healthy, you can progress to the following steps. Progress only when all cats are OK with each other during each step.

1. Switch sleeping blankets between the new cat and resident cats so they have a chance to become accustomed to each other's scent. Also put the scented blankets underneath their food dishes.
2. Use two doorstops (one on each side) to prop open the door just enough to allow the cats to see each other (an inch opening) but not get in or out, and repeat the process of feeding them on opposite sides of the now cracked-open door.
3. Put the new cat in a secure cat carrier and open the door so the resident cat can come in and sniff all around the new cat's room and the new cat in the carrier.
4. Confine resident cats in another room, and let the new cat explore the rest of the house. This switch provides another way for the cats to have experience with each other's scent without a face-to-face meeting. It also allows the newcomer to become familiar with her new surroundings without being frightened by other animals.

Step 3. Meeting!

The final moment – the first full meeting! Open the isolation room door and calmly observe. You may want to have a water spray bottle in one hand and a blanket in the other, just in case you need to intervene in a sudden attack. Playing calming music or talking in a calm, friendly voice to the cats will help YOU to feel less stressed, which will help the cats too! Hissing, puffy tail posturing, and growling are normal but should be minimal if you have taken the time to follow the steps above as suggested. It may be that the first meeting is only a few minutes if the hissing/growling starts to escalate.

You want to TRY to avoid any interactions between the cats that result in either fearful or aggressive behavior. If these responses are allowed to become a habit, they can be difficult to change. It's better to introduce the animals to each other gradually (five minutes more each day) so that neither cat becomes afraid or aggressive. You can expect mild hissing, but if it escalates into growling or swatting, separate the cats and try again for a shorter amount of time after they've calmed down.



If the cats do unexpectedly attack each other, spray in their direction with the water bottle to get their attention on to something else, and use the blanket as a visual and physical barrier until you can get one of the cats closed back into a separate room. Cats can make lots of noise and roll around together quite dramatically without either cat being injured. If small spats do occur between the cats, you should not attempt to intervene directly to separate the cats. Instead, use a spray bottle to squirt water on the cats in order to separate them. If that doesn't do it, try to cover and wrap one up in a blanket to get them separated.

Give them both a chance to calm down before re-introducing them to each other – a day or more. Take a step or two back (back to feeding on either side of propped open door for example) and slowly move forward when they've calmed back down.

Hopefully, none of this will be necessary, but if so, be confident that while it may take weeks to months, most cats can learn to get along, if not become the best of friends.

Tips for after the first introduction

- Keep the second litter box in the isolation room even after the cats are out together – if you want to move it, do so gradually, a few feet at a time, to the new location.
- Clean all the boxes more frequently.
- Make sure that one of the cats isn't being "ambushed" by another while trying to use the box.
- Keep the resident cat's schedule as close as possible to what it was before the newcomer's appearance.
- Calming products like herbal remedies (such as Rescue Remedy) and synthetic hormone spray (such as Feliway) can help de-stress cats.

ch. 11

introducing a new cat to your dog(s)

We're purrr-fect
for each other!



There are many ways you can introduce cats and dogs. “Slow” can be as quickly as one week, or it can take months, depending on the pets being introduced. We use these six steps to use a crate, and going SLOW. Taking at least one week to do a slow, step-by-step introduction is really worth it, for everyone’s safety and stress levels – including yours!

For the rest of this chapter, for simplicity’s sake, we’ll call your dog Rover, and your new cat Kitty.

You may wonder, why all these steps? Why not just put Rover in a crate or on a leash and let Kitty loose in the same room? That does sometimes work.... BUT even “dog-friendly” cats can suddenly attack a dog they perceive as a threat, and a cat’s paws and claws go right through most crate openings. Cats can blind a dog with their claws, rip dogs’ ears to shreds with their teeth, and a cat bite is a nasty puncture wound that often gets infected. And, of course, many dogs can kill a cat with one shake. A good big crate isn’t cheap, but neither is a trip to the vet! To avoid those risks, here are steps for a safe cat-to-dog introduction.

You can use this introduction technique for a resident-cat to new-dog introduction, just skip Kitty’s “isolation and adjustment” part of Step 1, while keeping her completely separated from Rover while you get him ready, and follow the rest!

Step 1. Get ready

Getting Rover and Kitty ready can take some time, depending on their prior training and personalities. To get Rover ready, if he does not already know the commands “sit” and “stay,” he should learn them before being introduced to Kitty for the first time (check out the “Dog Behavior and Training” articles on Adopt-a-Pet.com for positive reinforcement training tips). To get Kitty ready, she will need an isolation room, with her food, water, litter box and bed. Give her a chance to become adjusted to her new home – depending on her personality, this can be anywhere from one day to several weeks. If she’s hiding or jumpy, give

her more time. You can spend time with her in the starter room, but Rover should stay outside... no peeking!

Step 2. Opposite sides of the door

Feed Rover and Kitty on opposite sides of a closed solid door (not glass, screen, or see-through) for one week. They will begin to associate each other’s presence (smell, sounds) with a pleasurable experience – eating! If Rover starts whining/pawing/barking at the door, correct him with a stern but calm “No!” and move the food bowls farther away, keep him on a leash, and gradually move his bowl closer to the cat’s door each feeding time. Eventually when they are eating calmly next to the door, expose them to each other’s scent more strongly by rubbing them with a towel or rag, and placing the towels down by their food bowls, so they smell each other’s scents as they eat.

Step 3. Get Kitty used to the crate

The goal is to get Kitty used to spending short periods of time in a big wire crate (ideal) or molded plastic airline pet carrier, one that’s at least large enough for her to stand up and turn around. Bigger is better.

To get started, lock Rover away, and lure Kitty into the crate with a cat treat or a tiny bit of canned food, and shut the crate door for five minutes, then let her out. If Kitty is nervous in the crate, practice this two or three times a day until she is relaxed. If she won’t go in the crate, try making a trail of treats/food into the crate -- or you may have to pick her up and put her in the crate. Rover should be totally separated and as far away as possible, in another room, for example, or out on a walk.

Step 4. Dog on leash, cat in crate

I find this step easiest to do after Rover's daily exercise.

This goal of this step is to have them see each other with NO physical contact. Put Kitty in her crate in her room. Put a leash on Rover and bring him into the crate room. Command him to either "sit" or "down" and "stay" as soon as he enters, but where he can see Kitty. Have him practice his sit, down, shake, etc., for five minutes in that location. If he ignores your command because he's too interested in the cat, or barks, growls, or lunges, use your firm "no" and walk him out of the room. Get his attention outside again by practicing a few commands, then try entering the room again.

Remember to breathe and think calm thoughts, and try to keep some slack in the leash. The "worst" that will happen is Rover or Kitty will lunge at each other, and you should not let Rover get close enough to the crate for Kitty to be able to reach him – everyone is safe! Pets respond to the tension they feel in you. It often helps to say things out loud in a pleasant tone, like, "Kitty, this is your big brother, Rover."

Repeat this step for as many days as you need to, until both Kitty and Rover can be in the same room without tension, fear, aggression, vocalizing, or any other undesired behavior. This can happen the very first time, or it can take weeks or months – or, rarely, never. There are some high prey-drive dogs or territorial cats that cannot live freely and safely together. If you've spent a week or more with trying at least three sessions a day, and they are still acting aggressively toward each other or staring tensely with no improvement, please consult with a professional behaviorist/trainer. Staring is often a warning an animal is about to attack. Please be very careful if your dog or cat seems "calm" but is actually tense, stiff, and staring.

With each five-minute training session, allow them to get a little closer to each other, with Rover still on leash and

Kitty still in the crate. Then leave with lots of praise for everyone being so good! If Kitty becomes frightened or Rover starts ignoring you, increase the distance between them and progress more slowly. Eventually, they should be brought close enough together to allow them to investigate each other visually and calmly. Then you can allow Rover to sniff at the kennel and Kitty, as long as he remains calm and listens to you if you say "sit" or "come."

Now increase the length of the sessions together. If Rover or Kitty is agitated, you may have to spend as many days as necessary with the cat in the crate and the dog on leash, until they are calm and relaxed. You may find distracting yourself with a book or a DVD will relax you, and that will help them relax too!

Once Rover and Kitty have sniffed each other through the crate with no issues, and you can spend a half-hour in the room with everyone relaxed right next to each other, you are ready for Step 5.

Step 5. Dog leashed, cat loose

With Rover on leash in a down-stay at the far side of the room, have a helper open the door of the crate. Keep Rover focused on you with training commands and treats. If Kitty stays in the crate, tempt her out by tossing a treat just outside the crate door. If she won't come out, leave the room with Rover, wait for Kitty to walk out of the crate, and come back in with Rover. Kitty may run and hide – just focus on keeping Rover in his down-stay. If he reacts to the cat walking or running, you'll need to do the three daily sessions outlined in Step 4 until he's once again ignoring the cat while she is loose. NEVER allow Rover to "play" by chasing Kitty. This is a game that can turn deadly in an instant.

I recommend keeping Rover on leash or in a crate (when not locked away completely) for the next two weeks, gradually increasing the amount of time they are spending together until...

Step 6. Both loose together!

It's been two weeks with Rover hanging out and seeing Kitty run, jump, play and they're now always acting relaxed, mostly ignoring each other. You can unhook his leash – congratulations, you've successfully introduced your new cat to your dog!

For at least the next month, when you are not home, keep them separated with a physical barrier (crate, door, etc.) to be certain they will be safe. With bigger or high prey-drive dog breeds, you may always want to keep them safely separated when you are not home.

Additional tips

- 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 his frustration as aggression toward the cat.
- Dogs like to eat cat food – keep the cat food high enough to be out of the dog's reach.
- Although there are no health hazards to a dog eating cat feces, it is usually distasteful to owners, and so tempting to dogs it's hard to train them not to (could you leave your dog alone with a cheeseburger at nose level)? One great solution is to place the litter box where the dog cannot access it, but the cat can easily – such as behind a baby gate, or in a closet or cabinet with a cat door cutout, or the door wedged open (from both sides) just wide enough for the cat.

ch. 12

common items poisonous to cat/kitten

If your cat/kitten ingests any of the items below, call or take him to your vet immediately. **Some can be fatal if not treated as soon as possible.** Keep all these items completely locked away out of cat and kitten reach.

People food

People food can seriously harm our furry friends, and accounted for more than 15,000 pet poisoning cases reported to the ASPCA Poison Center in just one year! Just because your cat or kitten ate one of these items once and was OK does not mean they will be OK the next time -- depending on the season, fruit ripeness, and other variable factors, the levels of toxins can vary, as well as your pet's resistance when ingesting them. Better safe than sorry, don't let your pet have access or eat any of these items:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Avocado (the toxin is thought to be in the plant's leaves, bark, pits and skin)
- Chocolate (all forms)
- Coffee (all forms)
- Fatty foods
- Macadamia nuts (this nut can cause temporary weakness in a pet's hind legs)
- Moldy or spoiled foods
- Onions, onion powder
- Raisins and grapes
- Salt
- Yeast dough (raw because it expands in stomach)
- Garlic, garlic powder
- Products sweetened with xylitol (i.e. chewing gum or mints)

Common household and yard poisons

- Animal toxins: ingested toads, insects, spiders, snakes and scorpions
- Blue-green algae in ponds
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost piles
- Fertilizers
- Many household and yard insecticides
- Many indoor and outdoor plants and trees
- Plant bulbs
- Swimming-pool treatment supplies
- Fly baits, especially those containing methomyl
- Peeling paint

- Slug and snail baits, especially those containing metaldehyde

Medications

These are just some examples of common human medications that can be potentially lethal to pets, even in small doses:

- Pain killers (including Advil®, Tylenol®, etc.)
- Cold medicines
- Anti-cancer drugs
- Antidepressants
- Vitamins
- Diet pills

Common household hazards

- Antifreeze (REALLY DANGEROUS BECAUSE IT IS SWEET TASTING)
- Liquid potpourri
- Some ice melting products
- Rat and mouse poison
- Fabric softener sheets
- Mothballs
- Post-1982 pennies (due to high concentration of zinc)
- Cocoa garden mulch

Holiday hazards

- Christmas tree water (may contain fertilizer, pesticides, fire retardants or bacteria)
- Electrical cords
- Ribbons or tinsel (can cause intestinal obstruction requiring surgery)
- Batteries
- Glass ornaments

ch. 13

new cat/ kitten supply list

- Litter box
- Litter scoop
- Cat bed(s) or soft folded-up blanket
- Toys
- Cat tree, condo or scratch post
- Collar (safe breakaway collar)
- ID tag
- Cat carrier (for vet trips, etc.)
- Steel or glass food dishes
- Steel or glass water bowl

Recurring supplies

- Cat litter
- Cat food
- Flea control

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