

Tips for making your home cat friendly

As cats are territorial, their environment is extremely important to them. Ensuring your home is cat friendly can help to prevent and relieve stress in your cat.

In multi-cat households, stress can often originate where there is competition for resources (e.g., litter trays, bowls, beds). A good rule of thumb is to provide 'one more than the number of cats'.



Food and water

- ✓ Each cat in the household should have its own food bowl. Consider offering food in ceramic or glass bowls, as cats can find plastic and metal bowls off-putting.
- ✓ Water bowls should be numerous and found on each level of the house - keep them topped up!
- ✓ Experiment to see what your cat likes – some cats prefer to drink mineral water or collected rain water, rather than tap water. Some cats prefer flowing water which could be provided by special water fountains or even a dripping tap!
- ✓ Keep food and water bowls separate – cats don't like combined water and food bowls.



Litter trays

- ✓ Offer litter trays in a variety of quiet locations, away from your cat's food and water.
- ✓ Some cats prefer covered trays, others prefer open trays. Experiment to see what litter substrate your cat likes best (fine, sandy clumping litter is usually preferred) - make sure the litter is deep and is cleaned regularly.
- ✓ Ideally, one more litter tray than the number of cats should be offered. This is particularly important in multi-cat households.
- ✓ It is a good idea to provide outdoor cats with an indoor litter tray.



Provide security

- ✓ Cat flaps, whilst offering access to the outside world, can be seen as a weak point in their home's defences.
- ✓ Try to avoid entry of other cats (or animals) into your household by not placing food in close proximity to the cat flap and considering microchip operated cat flaps.
- ✓ Ideally, avoid changing too many things in the home environment at once.



Dens

- ✓ Cats spend a good proportion of their time resting. As natural climbers, providing high-up resting places offers security as they can observe their world at a safe height.
- ✓ As well as high-placed dens, private spaces are also important for cats, these spaces are typically warm and enclosed. Your cat should not be disturbed in this space.



Support behavioural balance



Play

- ✔ Cats enjoy toys that replicate their instinctive hunting drives - such toys include those made from natural materials, feathers, or fur-like material.
- ✔ The use of food-enriched puzzle toys, which provide your cat with mental stimulation as they work to obtain their meal, is recommended.



Scratching posts

- ✔ It is normal for cats to scratch to sharpen their claws and mark their territory.
- ✔ Providing a scratching post will reduce the likelihood of scratching being redirected onto other objects, such as your sofa.
- ✔ Ideally, provide a scratching post that is tall. It should be taller than your cat when they are stood on their hindlegs with front legs outstretched.



Social contact

- ✔ Most cats enjoy the company of people, other cats or other species (e.g., dogs), however interactions must be dictated by the cat and not forced. Ensure your cat can escape from social interactions when they need to.



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