



## Cat Problems and Solutions

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Companion Dogs

### LITTERBOXES

Location: Keep box separate from food and water bowls, heavily trafficked areas and other pets, ESPECIALLY kids and dogs. Boxes by windows where outside cats wander will put a cat off the box.

Number: A chicken in every pot and two boxes for each cat. Cats will urinate in one box and defecate in the other, if available. Have more boxes than cats!

Litter: Cats that do not like their litter will shake their paws when getting out of the box, straddle the box, zoom out of the box immediately after using it, or use the area right next to the box. CHANGE THE LITTER!

Changing Litter: Line up four boxes, each with a different litter. For a week, watch to see which litter the cat prefers. Litters to try are: 1) sheets of newspaper 2) shredded newspaper 3) clumping sand 4) potting soil and 5) plain clay litter.

Kids and Cats: Kids will often grab at the cat when it is in the box. One or two captures like this will keep the cat out of the box permanently.

Dogs and Cats: Like kids, dogs will often annoy cats when they are in the box. Keep cat boxes where kids and dogs cannot capture them. Try closet doors, under the sink, on top of the washing machine or cutting a small cat door into the room where the box is located.

Cleanliness: Clean to YOU may not be clean to the CAT! Remove all solid waste twice a day. Completely change litter once a week. Use less litter and clean the box more often. If using the clumping sand, remove all clumps twice a day.

Cleaning the Box: Once a month, wash the entire box. Use clear water only and let box dry in the sun. NEVER use detergents or soaps, ESPECIALLY Lysol. These odors will put the cat off the box in nothing flat.

Covered Boxes: If a covered box is used, be sure that it has a charcoal filter on the top for odors to filter through. Plastic covered boxes with no filters smell like an outhouse on a hot day. If the cat sticks her head into the box and backs out, she thinks the box stinks and/or isn't clean enough. No matter what YOU think, the cat is correct. Some cats will not use a covered box under any conditions.

Outside Cats: Cats roaming outside your inside cats' house will create marking, spraying and not using the box. GET RID OF THE OUTSIDE CAT! Use water, air horn, aluminum foil or cold ice packs on resting places.

Breeding Season: Even neutered/spayed indoor cats will be affected by breeding season. Increased marking/spraying may result. It's temporary.

This and That: Put plastic carpet runners where cat is marking. Some cats will not return to areas that are sprayed with lemon scent, citrus scents, sage or Listerine. Aluminum foil over favorite marking areas can help to discourage marking. Some cats will urinate in depressions such as spoon rests and cushioned chairs. Change the environment.

## **SPRAYING**

1. Neuter/Spay
2. Outside Cats Nearby
3. Too Many Cats in the Household: Cats are really not group living animals. Some cats cannot live peacefully with other cats. Also, cats need sub-territories that are theirs, within the larger territory of the house. Too many cats (and they are easy to collect, aren't they?) will create trouble with fighting and spraying.
4. Scents: If you bring in the scent of other cats on your clothing, your own cat may spray in response to the mystery cat that has invaded her territory

## **FIGHTING**

1. Too Many Cats in the House
2. Neuter
3. Introduce Slowly: Introducing a new cat into the house can take six months. Patience is the key. Keep cats separate for these months. Use pens, cages, doors, screen doors, etc. to keep cats physically separate while they adjust.
4. Multiple Bowls: Have one more bowl than there are cats, and of course, two litter boxes per cat.

## **BITING HUMANS**

Play Aggression: Cats that hide and then jump at your ankles, biting and kicking, are usually playing. It's a cat; they cannot play Monopoly. Play with the cat more often, and use a water correction on the cat.

Bites When Petted: Some cats will ripple their skin when they are being pet, then suddenly turn and bite, and then run away. Stop petting the cat when the tail twitches and the skin ripples.

These cats cannot tolerate much stimulation of the skin.

Weather: Cats are EXTREMELY affected by hot, dry winds. They can be irritable and bite. Stay away from your cats during these and other unusual weather conditions. As a matter of fact, stay away from most humans as well.

## **EATING INEDIBLE OBJECTS**

Sucking or Eating Cloth: Keep cat away from cloth. Treat sample cloth with Bitter Apple or Listerine. Give cat hard items to chew. Chicken necks may also be given.

Kittens: Kittens WILL chew and swallow small objects. Keep dental floss, string, baggie tie wraps, and rubber bands away from kittens. Keep play sessions with kitten frequent.