

FELINE BEHAVIOR: THE LITTERBOX

Create the best litterbox experience for your cat. Here are some general guidelines for those just starting out with a new cat and what to do if your cat is not using the box.

THE LITTERBOX

Most of the litterboxes sold are not designed with a cat's needs in mind. Here are some things your cat would like you to consider when selecting a litterbox:

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

- At least 1.5 lengths of your cat from nose to base of tail.
- Height of entry (lower for seniors)
- Taller sides help keep everything in the box
- Clear (to watch around them) vs Opaque
- Dual Entry consideration for multi-cat households
- UNCOVERED preferred by most

DIY: Transform larger storage and under-the-bed containers to customize the height, size and location of entry for your cat.

LITTER

- Fine
- UNSCENTED
- Clumping
- ~2" deep

Once cat has preference, stay with the same brand/type

HOW MANY?

- Number of litterboxes = Number of cats + one

LOCATION

- Multiple locations spread around the house
- Away from food and water
- Clear access/escape routes to and from
- Away from high traffic and noisy areas (like washing machines) but not out of the way

CLEANLINESS

- Scoop litter at least once a day.
- Replace all litter every ~2 weeks
- Wash out litterbox with hot water and a mild soap like DAWN (NO harsh chemicals or bleach)
- Replace with similar box annually

INAPPROPRIATE ELIMINATION

If your cat has been urinating (or defecating) outside of the litterbox seek assistance right away! This is your cat's way of communicating to you that something is not right. Be sure to note when, where and how often this is occurring.

FIRST STEP: EXAM BY VETERINARIAN

Inappropriate elimination can be a symptom of a variety of medical issues. It is not just a behavior problem.

Any attempt to modify your cat's behavior with an untreated underlying medical issue will be frustrating, unsuccessful and cause the medical condition to worsen or become life threatening

2. ASSESS SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS

Cat's are very sensitive to their surroundings. Anxiety and stress have a strong influence your cat's behavior.

3. ASSESS CURRENT LITTERBOX SETUP

Cat's have individual preferences. Is your litterbox setup preferred and convenient for you or your cat?

4. DEVELOP A PLAN.

Address medical issues, decrease stress, improve litterbox factors to encourage appropriate use while being proactive to prevent future elimination issues.

Contact us to help you develop a systematic plan to get your cat thinking inside the box!

NEUTRALIZE URINE ODOR

Use a product that was designated to remove urine odor through ENZYMATIC action, such as:

- Anti-Icky Poo
- The Equalizer Carpet Stain and Odor Eliminator
- Urine Off Odor & Stain Remover for Cats
- Nature's Miracle Stain and Odor Removal

TIP: Use a Black light and outline area with painter's tape first