

MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEW CAT

You have adopted a loving cat and if your new cat could speak he or she would say:

Thank you for giving me a home – I am so grateful! But, until I get to know you, I will be kind of confused about what is going on in my life. So, please give me a little time to adjust to my new home. I'm sure you've gotten everything ready for me, and I know it will be great, but I might be a little nervous at first. Please help me adjust by giving me a room of my own for at least one day, with food, water, a litterbox, a bed and toys. It will give me a safe haven so I can get used to the smells and sounds of my new home.

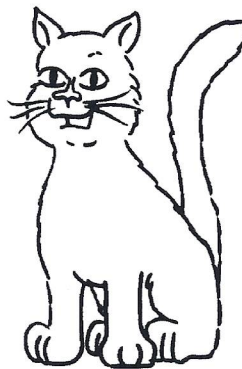
Be sure to visit me often and spend time with me. But even if I'm not feeling social right away, I will come around when I feel secure.

Please keep me inside; if you let me roam outside, I could get lost or hurt. I will love being safe in the house with you.

I will one day show you how much I love you. Purring, sitting on your lap, looking at you adoringly and so much more. But please give me time to show you how I feel.

Love,

Your Kitty



P.S. It would make me feel safer to have a collar and I.D. tags so if I get lost I can be returned to you and the home I have learned to love.

CAT BEHAVIOR INDEX

- Welcome Home! Helping Your New Cat Adjust
- Litterbox
 - Preventing Litterbox Problems
 - Solutions to Litterbox Problems
- Introductions
 - Introducing a New Cat to Resident Cats
 - Introducing a New Cat to a Resident Dog
- Scratching
 - Declawing Cats: Far Worse Than a Manicure
 - An Interview with Nicholas Dodman
 - Alternatives to Declawing
 - It's Easy to Train a Cat To Use a Scratching Post
 - How to Trim a Cat's Nails
- Food
 - Feed the very best food you can afford

Any Other Behavioral Issues – OAHS Is Here To Help

Welcome Home! Helping Your New Cat Adjust

Congratulations! You've got a new kitty. Even though you're probably very excited about the new addition to your family, your cat may be feeling anxious and nervous about all the changes going on. To relieve the newcomer's stress and help ease the transition into the new household we recommend the following:

1. Give the cat a room of its own (safe room) for at least 24 hours with food, water, and a litterbox. It's important to your cat because:
 - Litterbox habits are reinforced before the cat is allowed to explore the rest of the house.
 - The cat can get used to the new smells and sounds of their new home from the security of their "safe room." If something scares the cat while it is adjusting to your home, it will go back to the safe room.
 - Stress is reduced for both the cat and the owner.
 - Some cats want to leave the safe room sooner than others. If your cat is trying to get out of the room before 24 hours has passed, go ahead and start the introduction to the rest of the house or your other pets.
 - Start by letting the cat come out of the safe room and explore part of the house. The cat does not need to go in every room or the basement the first time it comes out of the safe room. It is common for your cat to continue to go to the safe room for about 2 weeks. Please be sure to leave a litterbox in the safe room until the cat is no longer using the room.
2. Visit the room frequently and talk soothingly to the cat. If the cat is hiding, do not try to drag them out of his hiding place. Some cats take more time than others before feeling secure in a new environment. If the cat is hiding, talk quietly to him/her and offer canned food.
3. If you have other pets in the house, please read "Introducing a New Cat to Resident Cats" and/or "Introducing a New Cat to a Dog."
4. If there are children in the home, allow supervised visits with Kitty until the cat is comfortable with her new home and family.
5. When no one is home, your new kitty should go back into the safe room until you are comfortable with your cat's behavior.

If, at any time, you have any questions or concerns, please contact the staff at the Oshkosh Area Humane Society at 920-303-3166.

Preventing Litter Box Problems

1. Have your cat spayed or neutered. Sexually mature, intact cats frequently use urine and fecal marking to indicate their territory. Neutering will correct 90% of elimination problems.
2. The rule of thumb for the number of litter boxes is: one per cat in the household, plus one. Extra litter boxes are necessary because some cats like to defecate in one and urinate in another. Others will not use a box that has already been soiled or used by another cat.
3. The single most common reason for a cat's refusal to use a litter box is because the box is dirty. Use a good clumping litter and scoop the litter box at least twice a day.
4. Choose a litter that appeals to the cat and do not change brands of litter often. Most cats prefer the texture of the sand-like scooping litters. Be sure to choose a brand that clumps into a firm ball, making scooping easier and cleaner. If you use a good quality litter, you don't have to ever throw it away. As you scoop out the clumps add enough litter to keep the level at about 2".
5. NEVER use scented litter. Perfumed, chemical scents repel cats. When you wash the litter box, use a mild dishwashing liquid. Do not use harsh chemicals or bleach that will leave an odor.
6. Do not use litter box liners - they can be irritating to some cats and it teaches cats to urinate on plastic. Also, covered or hooded litter boxes may be offensive to some cats. Be sure the litter box is not too small for your cat. The minimum size for a litter box is 22" x 16." Storage totes work well. Use the 66 qt. size. The box should be 1 ½ times the size of the cat so the cat can comfortably turn around in the box.
7. Place litter boxes in quiet, private places that are easily accessible to the cat and where it will not be disturbed by children or ambushed by other pets. Noisy areas near washing machines, furnaces, or under stairs may frighten the cat away from the box. A house with several stories should have a litter box on each floor. NEVER place litter boxes near food and water dishes.
8. Kittens need a limited area to roam as they are still learning bladder and bowel control so you should limit their territory until they learn that the litter box is the only acceptable place for elimination. Praise and rewards will speed up the learning process. Like small children, they should not be expected to travel very far to find their toilet areas.
10. Help your cat feel comfortable in his own home and territory. Play games with him, give him a massage, talk to him frequently. Give him positive and affectionate attention. A confident, secure, contented and relaxed cat does not need to relieve anxiety and stress by such extreme measures as urine or fecal marking.

If your cat is having litter box issues, call the Oshkosh Area Humane Society at 920.303.3166. CALL IMMEDIATELY.

Solutions to Litter Box Problems

1. Have your cat examined by a veterinarian for a physical problem. Be sure to mention kitty's urination and defecation habits. If a cat's elimination is painful, it may associate the litter box with pain and choose to eliminate elsewhere. When the cat is healthy again, a careful reintroduction to the box will be necessary.
2. Carefully check the 10 steps for preventing litter box problems. Are you following all of them? Perhaps the solution is as easy as adding more litter boxes, scooping more frequently, or changing the brand of litter. Try to accommodate kitty's preferences for location and litter material whenever possible.
3. Never punish the cat for eliminating outside of its litter box. Housesoiling occurs when the litter box, its contents, or its location is offensive to the cat or when the cat is stressed by the environment. Punishment only increases the cat's stress. **HOUSESOILING IS NEVER DONE TO SPITE THE OWNER.**
4. If aversion to the litter box can be ruled out, consider that the problem could be anxiety-related. Has there been a change in the household? Any intrusion on the cat's territory, whether human, animal, or even a new piece of furniture, can cause a cat to feel threatened, insecure, and stressed. This results in his need to remind himself and the world of his territory. Territorial marking is usually accomplished by spraying urine on vertical surfaces, or less frequently, by squatting and urinating or defecating on horizontal surfaces.
5. Try to relieve or eliminate the source of the cat's anxiety. (For example, pull the drapes so that kitty cannot view the antics of the cat next door.)
6. Whatever the cause for the inappropriate elimination, the retraining process is the same. Confine him to a comfortable room with a clean litter box, fresh food and water, and a bed and toys. Visit kitty regularly, but don't let him out for one week. The second week, let him out only with supervision. When kitty is let out, it is important to **PRAISE APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.**
7. In order to thoroughly clean the urine-soaked areas, a black light may be used to identify the problem spots and a strong enzymatic cleaner should be used to saturate and neutralize them. To repel kitty from previously soiled areas, cover them with a vinyl carpet runner (upside down!), a solid air freshener (preferably a citrus scent), or bowls of dry cat food.

The Oshkosh Area Humane Society can help determine the cause and treatment for inappropriate elimination problems. Solving house soiling problems is possible - with patience, persistence, and a systematic plan for retraining. If your cat is having litter box issues, call the Oshkosh Area Humane Society at 920.303-3166.

Introducing a New Cat to Resident Cats

The introduction process is extremely important when adding a cat to your household. **First impressions can be lasting impressions for felines.** Time and patience are the keys to successfully introducing a new cat into the household.

All cats in the home must be spayed or neutered. Sexually mature, intact cats are naturally territorial and aggressive toward other cats.

Give the new cat a room of its own. A room where you can put the cat, food, water and litterbox and close the door.

After 24 hours, switch the cats. Put your resident cat in the new cat's room and let the new cat out in your living area. Do this for 20 minutes and then switch them back again. Wait 30 minutes and do another room switch. After the second switch, wait 30 minutes and then let the new cat out of the room. Expect some hissing and growling from the resident cat. Very normal, it will pass with time.

Wet food and play can also be used to help the cats accept each other.

Until you are sure the cats get along, never leave them alone together. If cats fight or act aggressively, separate the cats and reintroduce them using the same methods suggested above.

Other Tips:

Never handle a cat that is nervous or aroused. A frightened or angry cat can cause severe injury to the handler.

Kitty condos, cat trees, scratching posts, and toys help to provide stimulations and relieve stress in multi-cat households. If your cats do stalk or fight with each other, do not put your hand in to break it up. Throw a pillow or a soft object at them or make a loud noise to startle them to break it up.

Call the Oshkosh Area Humane Society if you have any concerns or questions. 920-303-3166.

Introducing a New Cat to a Resident Dog

Dogs and cats who have not have experience with the opposite species may require some extra time to become accustomed to each other. Dogs usually want to chase and play with cats, and cats are usually afraid and defensive.

1. The dog should not meet the cat as soon as the dog comes into the home. The cat should be in a room with the door closed. Recommend you keep the cat in a separate room for at least 24 hours so they both have some adjustment time. Remember, they can smell a lot better than humans so both know there is another animal in the house. After 24 hours, the introduction process should start.

3. Someone should have the cat on a table or couch and someone else should bring the dog to the cat on a leash. Always use a leash for the introduction so everyone is safe. The cat will either react by hissing, assuming the Halloween kitty pose and smacking the dog or will remain calm, sniff the dog and want to be friends right away. Two people work best for this so there is one person able to interact with each animal if necessary.

It is critical the dog is **not allowed** to chase the cat at all during the first 30 days. It can be beneficial to have your dog drag a leash during the first couple of days of interaction between the dog and cat. If your dog tries to chase the cat, you must stop it. The cat is always in charge. You must always reinforce the status of the cat as the top animal. The reason is dogs by their sheer size and power in most cases can hurt a cat if they want to.

It is also very important the cat have some high places it can get to if it feels the need to get away from the dog quickly. Cat furniture or shelving is great to have.

4. Always reward your dog with treats for the correct behavior around the cat.

5. If you have 2 or more dogs, introduce each separately to the cat.

6. **Keep the dog and cat separated when you are not home** until you are certain the cat will be safe. Do not take a chance on one of them getting hurt by rushing this.

7. If your dog seems to be extremely fixated on the cat and you are not completely comfortable using this introduction process, please call us and we can give you other ways to introduce your dog and cat.

Precautions: Why dogs like to “raid the litterbox” is not well understood, but eating cat feces is a relatively common behavior. Although there are no health hazards to the dog from this habit, it is usually distasteful to owners. The best solution is to place the litterbox where the dog cannot access it - such as behind a baby gate.

**PLEASE CALL THE OSHKOSH AREA HUMANE SOCIETY IF
YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS. 920-303-3166**

Declawing Cats: Far Worse Than a Manicure

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

Declawing is a topic that arouses strong feelings. Some people believe it's cruel and unnecessary, while others think it has its place.

Why people declaw cats

People often mistakenly believe that declawing their cats is a harmless "quick fix" for unwanted scratching. They don't realize that declawing can make a cat less likely to use the litter box or more likely to bite.

People who are worried about being scratched, especially those with immunodeficiencies or bleeding disorders, may be told incorrectly that their health will be protected by declawing their cats. However, declawing is not recommended by infectious disease specialists. The risk from scratches for these people is less than those from bites, cat litter, or fleas carried by their cats.

Cats are usually about 8 weeks old when they begin scratching. It's the ideal time to train kittens to use a scratching post and allow nail trims. Pet caregivers should not consider declawing a routine prevention for unwanted scratching. Declawing can actually lead to an entirely different set of behavior problems that may be worse than shredding the couch.

What is declawing?

Too often, people think that declawing is a simple surgery that removes a cat's nails—the equivalent of having your fingernails trimmed. Sadly, this is far from the truth.

Declawing traditionally involves the amputation of the last bone of each toe. **If performed on a human being, it would be like cutting off each finger at the last knuckle.**

How is a cat declawed?

The standard method of declawing is amputating with a scalpel or guillotine clipper. The wounds are closed with stitches or surgical glue, and the feet are bandaged.

Another method is laser surgery, in which a small, intense beam of light cuts through tissue by heating and vaporizing it. However, it's still the amputation of the last toe bone of the cat and carries with it the same long-term risks of lameness and behavioral problems as does declawing with scalpels or clippers.

A third procedure is the tendonectomy, in which the tendon that controls the claw in each toe is severed. The cat keeps his claws, but can't control them or extend them to scratch. This procedure is associated with a high incidence of abnormally thick claw growth. Therefore, more frequent and challenging nail trims are required to prevent the cat's claws from snagging on people, carpet, furniture, and drapes, or growing into the pads.

Because of its complications, tendonectomy may lead to declawing anyway. Although tendonectomy is not actually amputation, a 1998 study published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association found the incidence of bleeding, lameness, and infection was similar for tendonectomy and declawing.

After effects

Medical drawbacks to declawing include pain, infection and tissue necrosis (tissue death), lameness, and back pain. Removing claws changes the way a cat's foot meets the ground and can cause pain similar to wearing an uncomfortable pair of shoes. There can also be a regrowth of improperly removed claws, nerve damage, and bone spurs.

For several days after surgery, shredded newspaper is typically used in the litter box to prevent litter from irritating declawed feet. This unfamiliar litter substitute, accompanied by pain when scratching in the box, may lead cats to stop using the litter box. Some cats may become biters because they no longer have their claws for defense.

What you can do

Scratching is normal cat behavior. It isn't done to destroy a favorite chair or to get even. Cats scratch to remove the dead husks from their claws, mark territory and stretch their muscles.

Many countries feel so strongly about the issue that they have banned the procedure. But you don't have to let your cat destroy your house.

Here's what you can do:

- Keep his claws trimmed to minimize damage to household items.
- Provide several stable scratching posts and boards around your home. Offer different materials like carpet, sisal, wood, and cardboard, as well as different styles (vertical and horizontal). Use toys and catnip to entice your cat to use the posts and boards.
- Ask your veterinarian about soft plastic caps (such as Soft Paws) that are glued to the cat's nails. They need to be replaced about every six weeks.
- Use a special tape (such as Sticky Paws) on furniture to deter your cat from unwanted scratching.

http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/cats/tips/declawing.html?utm_source=ip073112&utm_medium=hsvmaweb&utm_campaign=resources

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A copy of the AVAR's latest annual report may be obtained upon request from its national office or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

An Interview with Nicholas H. Dodman, BVMS, DACVB, DACVA, on cat declawing

Dr. Nicholas Dodman, BVMS attended Glasgow University Veterinary School in Scotland where he graduated with a BVMS degree (DVM equivalent) before becoming a surgical intern there and subsequently joining the faculty. At age 26, he became the youngest faculty member in Britain. He received a Diploma in Veterinary Anesthesia from the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and is board-certified by the American College of Veterinary Anesthesiologists and the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists. Dr. Dodman has written four acclaimed best-selling books, including *The Dog Who Loved Too Much*, *The Cat Who Cried for Help*, *Dogs Behaving Badly*, and, *If Only They Could Speak*, which was recently released. In addition to his books, he has written two textbooks and more than 100 articles and contributions to scientific books and journals. Dr. Dodman currently is a veterinary behaviorist in Westborough, Massachusetts. AVAR interviewed Dr. Dodman about cat declawing and its effects on cats.

AVAR: Many people consider scratching by a companion cat to be misbehavior when, in actuality, scratching is normal behavior. What steps can people take, and what recommendations should veterinarians make, to address unwanted cat scratching?

Dodman: I think the first thing to do when faced with the "problem" of a furniture-scratching cat is to take a deep breath and realize that, in fact, you live with a cat and that furniture scratching is normal behavior for the feline species. Dogs bark, parrots chew on things and poop all over the place, and cats scratch. That's just what they do. Some cats scratch more than others; the reason for this may be genetic or familial. It has been shown that cats with major league furniture-scratching moms are more likely to make the big leagues themselves. But there is another reason for increased scratching – that is stress. Similar to urine marking, when



Nicholas H. Dodman, BVMS

a cat is in a conflict situation, he or she will engage in increased furniture scratching behavior as a way of marking territory, since marking by scratching is both a visual and olfactory signal of ownership (cats have scent glands in their paws). One of the first things you need to do if you have a serious furniture scratching problem is to find out, via expert help if necessary, if your cat is in a stressful situation and what you can do to alleviate it. Addressing feuds between household cats, deterring unwelcome outside animal visitors, and ensuring harmony in the home can all be helpful. In addition, cats should be provided with a user-friendly environment, should be exercised regularly, and should have plenty of one-on-one time with their owners. A cat that likes other cats may benefit from a buddy, but anti-social cats may exhibit increased furniture scratching when their territory is "invaded" by another cat. Another thing owners can do to minimize damage and help assuage some of the worst aspects of furniture scratching is to keep the cat's claws trimmed or use glue-on plastic nail caps. A secondary function of furniture scratching is to condition claws by removing old nail husks. You can save the cat the bother by trimming his nails. Finally, introducing several scratching posts into the home to provide an acceptable substrate for scratching is a logical approach to dealing with this inevitable behavior. Scratching posts should be: a) multiple (N+1 where N



is the number of cats in the house), b) strategically placed in high profile scratch-prone areas (they can be moved to slightly more convenient locations later on), c) tall enough so that the cat can stretch to full height when scratching, d) must be entirely stable and not rock back and forth, and e) should be comprised of a variety of different substrates and preferably ones that are easily shreddable, such as burlap, foam rubber, or tree bark (yes, you can use tree branches). It's a good idea to position at least one scratching post near the cat's sleeping area as cats usually like to stretch and scratch when they wake up. If there are any particularly valuable objects in the house that you don't want scratched, there are a number of deterrents that can be used, including double-sided sticky tape, citrus spray, and plastic wrap. There is even a motion-sensitive device called SSScat™, which hisses compressed air at the cat if the cat approaches your prize possession too closely. But not all furniture should necessarily be off limits. If you have an old chair that your cat likes to scratch, let him do so. The chair can always be recovered at a later date and your cat's scratching there will divert scratching of more cherished objects. Go with the flow.

AVAR: Cat declawing is a serious surgical procedure that results in an amputation of the entire last digit of either eight or ten of the front toes and sometimes the back toes as well with no health benefits to the cat. Does it surprise you that so many veterinarians in this country are willing to perform and even recommend cat declawing?

Dodman: It is true that declawing is a serious surgical procedure and not merely a radical nail trim. Procedures vary and range from amputation of whole or part of the last digit to surgical or laser tendonectomy. A scientific evaluation of amputation versus tendonectomy showed no fewer complications in either group. Pain was recorded in up to two-thirds of the cats studied, and many became inactive and withdrawn for days or even weeks after the surgery. Twenty-eight percent of cats who were declawed developed post-operative behavior problems, such as house soiling or increased biting, and around eighty percent had at least one medical

complication. The myth that has been propagated by some veterinarians – and is deeply rooted in veterinary culture – is that declawing is a simple procedure that causes only minimal pain or discomfort. As a person who has recently undergone an osteotomy during hand surgery, I can testify that the post-operative period following hand surgery is extremely painful, even more so than other supposedly major surgeries like laparotomy. My position on declawing is that it should not be done and that people who can't tolerate a little furniture scratching should not have a cat.

AVAR: In your opinion, is there evidence that cat declawing causes negative behavior in cats?

Dodman: Yes, in my days as a veterinary anesthesiologist, I saw many cats recovering from declaw surgery and considered it to be one of the most painful post-anesthetic recoveries with declawed cats literally bouncing off the sides of the recovery cage. But don't take my word for it. The veterinary school in Saskatoon, Canada, opted to use surgical declaw as a pain model to test new methods of analgesia. They clearly had some confidence in the ability of this procedure to generate pain and serious pain at that. Some vets use fentanyl patches to provide analgesia for a day after surgery and, while that might help somewhat, it is only a partial solution, as the pain lasts longer than the fentanyl patch. Deformity, difficulty climbing/grasping objects, and behavior problems have all been reported following declaw surgery. It's hardly a surprise that, when you change a cat's litter for shredded paper in the post-surgical period, some cats do not use the shredded paper litter substrate and elect to eliminate on the carpet instead. That starts the vicious cycle of house soiling. Furthermore, increased biting was reported in the study mentioned, and it should come as no surprise that a cat that can't use his claws to fight will use his teeth, instead.

AVAR: What is your response when veterinarians say that, if they don't declaw a companion cat, the cat will end up in a shelter and likely be killed?

Dodman: My response is that most veterinarians do not bother with the kind of behavior modification as described

herein and do not have a handout to explain it to owners. Veterinarians who might try to deter owners from having their cat declawed often simply suggest the owners try scratching posts (without much detail about how to do that), suggest trimming the cat's nails and/or plastic nail caps. While this advice is basically correct, without a fuller explanation and hand-holding, it is unlikely to be successful – so the client simply returns some time later saying they tried that approach, and it didn't work. More time and attention from veterinarians is necessary to provide a viable alternative to the inhumane practice of declawing. Some veterinarians casually suggest to owners that they should have their cat declawed preemptively as part of a spay/declaw package (it's cheaper if you only need one anesthetic to do the two procedures, they say). I think this is a particularly callous and mercenary approach. There is always a way of converting, diverting and, to some extent, accepting a cat's furniture scratching. Amputation of claws and cutting of tendons is not the answer, should not be an option, and is only promulgated because, in this country, it is an option.

AVAR: What more can veterinarians do to stop cat declawing in this country?

Dodman: I've thought about this question quite long and hard and came up with the following strategy with the help of Dr. Paul Waldau from the Center for Animals and Public Policy at Tufts University Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. What we decided is that, if we were to make an absolutely truthful DVD on the subject of cat declawing, which compared the non-surgical alternatives with the surgical treatments available to deal with furniture scratching by cats, and made that DVD available free to all first-year veterinary students, we could educate the veterinarians of tomorrow and slowly change veterinary culture that way. Unfortunately, I don't think it is possible to change the behavior of the older generation of veterinarians who have become desensitized to the effects of the procedure and set in their ways.



Alternatives to Declawing

If you are considering declawing your cat, the Oshkosh Area Humane Society (OAHS) asks that you educate yourself on alternatives to declawing before taking your cat in for the surgery.

- It's easy to teach your cat to use a scratching post! Purchase a sisal rope post (OAHS sells a very good one at an excellent price) and put it in a spot that your cat frequents. Your scratching post must be in the room where you spend your time because that is where your kitty will be. Use a toy or laser light to get your cat to scratch on the post. You can also use treats to praise Kitty and give treats to reinforce positive behavior. Also use toys or laser light to entice Kitty to use the post.
- OAHS offers a Clip 'N Go service to all of our cat adopters. Bring your cat in and our staff will cut Kitty's nails for no charge. We are experienced in clipping and it only takes a few minutes. The shorter you keep your cat's nails, the less scratching he will do. Just call and make an appointment. Some cats can get a bit stressed when getting their nails cut. However, you can help get Kitty used to having his paws touched by touching his feet often at home.
- *SoftClaws* are vinyl covers for the nails. Kitty can use his claws but can't damage anything. Purchase a package here. There are enough applications for about 6 months. We will put them on your cat for no charge. These will have to be replaced about every 4-6 weeks.
- It's important to remember that kittens use their claws for everything until they are about 6-8 months old. At that age they seem to understand that as wonderful as those claws are, they don't have to have them extended every waking minute. They put them away and only use them when necessary.

If you have problems with your cat scratching inappropriately, please call the Oshkosh Area Humane Society at 920-303-3166 right away. We are a resource for you, and want to keep you and your kitty happy.

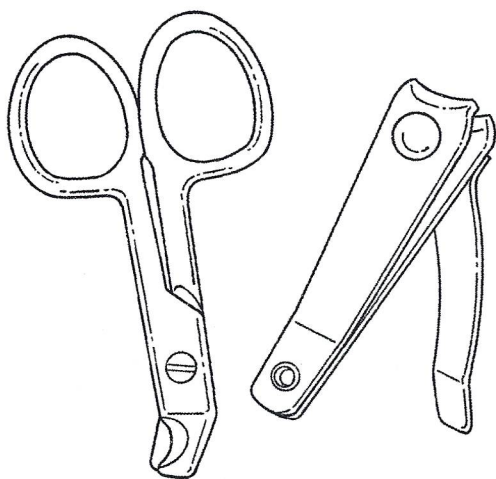
It's Easy to Train a Cat to Use a Scratching Post!

- A cat-appealing scratching post should be at least 36" tall, untippable, and covered with sisal rope or sisal material. Some cats also enjoy scratching on soft wood (e.g. cedar). If carpeting is used, it is likely that the cat may start scratching on other (unacceptable) carpeted surfaces.
- Place the post in a room where the cat spends a lot of time. Cats often like to scratch when they wake up from a nap. **The cat won't use the post if it is hidden away.**
- To introduce the post to your cat, use a toy or laser light. Play with the wand toy or laser light on the post and your cat will chase the toy or the light. Tell you kitty what a "good kitty" they are. Always reinforce the correct scratching, works better than punishing them for not using the post.
- If your cat is not excited to scratch the post, try rubbing catnip on the post. Most kittens do not react to catnip, but most adult cats will.
- After your cat begins to scratch, praise him and give him a food treat. (Small kittens can be trained to climb the post by showing them the food treat and then placing it on top of the post.)
- If you see your cat scratching a piece of furniture, clap your hands and take the cat to the post. Begin introduction again.
- Most cats take to this type of post quite naturally (although some prefer the cardboard scratchers that sit on the floor), but if your cat is the exception, please contact the Oshkosh Area Humane Society and we will find an effective solution for you and your cat.
- Do not give your cat run of the house until you are sure Kitty is scratching appropriately.

To find out how to purchase or make an irresistible scratching post call the Oshkosh Area Humane Society at 920-303-3166 or visit our website at www.oahs.org.

How to Trim a Cat's Claws

Trimming a cat's claws every few weeks is a vital part of maintaining the animal's hygiene. Regular trimming not only protects the health of a cat's caretakers, but also guarantees the well-being of their couches and arm-chairs. But if the idea of trimming a cat's claws has you biting your nails, know that all it takes is some patience and a bit of practice to sharpen your skills.

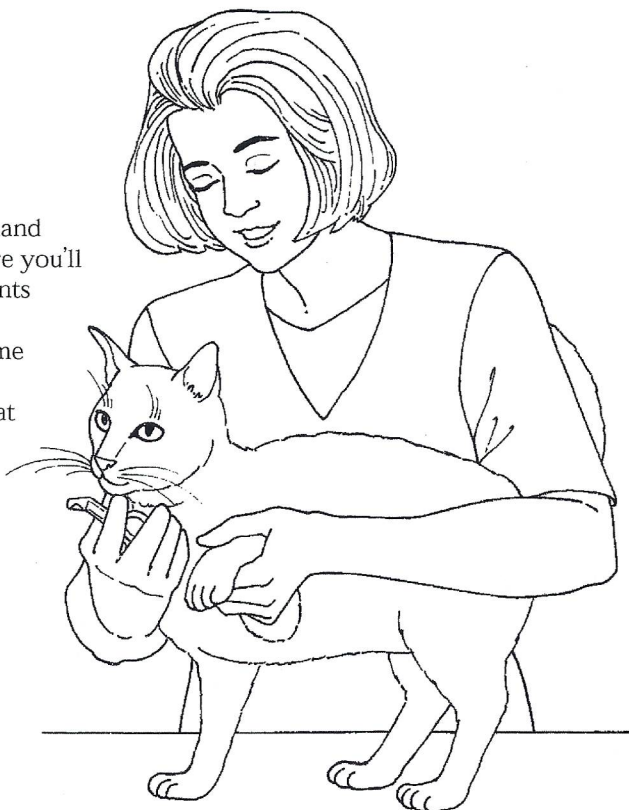


1: Stay On the Cutting Edge

There are plenty of tools available to trim a cat's claws; use whichever one works best for you and the animal. Some people prefer a special pair of scissors modified to hold a cat's claw in place, others prefer human nail clippers, and still others choose plier-like clippers or those with a sliding "guillotine" blade. Whatever your tool of choice, be sure the blade remains sharp; the blunt pressure from dull blades may hurt an animal and cause a nail to split or bleed.

2: Take Paws, Part I

If you approach a cat with a sharp object in one hand while trying to grab a paw with the other, odds are you'll come up empty-handed. Because cats' temperaments and dispositions vary greatly, there is no "perfect" way to handle a cat while trimming his claws. Some cats do well with no restraint at all, but most cats need to be held firmly but gently to make sure that no one gets hurt. Try resting the cat in the crook of one arm while holding one paw with the other hand. Or, place the animal on a table and lift one paw at a time. You may even be able to convince a particularly sociable cat to lay back in your lap.



HOW TO TRIM A CAT'S CLAWS *continued*



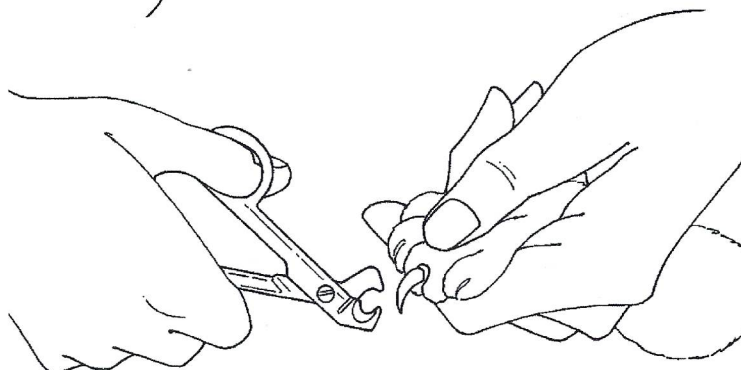
3: Take Paws, Part II

If you've got a helper, ask him to hold the cat while you clip the nails, or just ask him to rub the cat's nose or offer up a special treat.

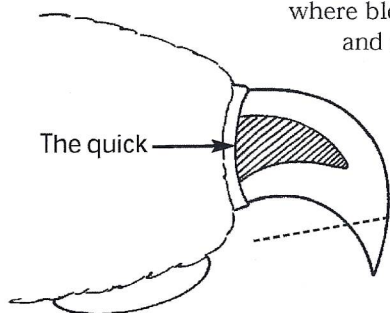
4: Take a Little Off the Top

Now that you're in position and the cat's in position, put the claw in the right position, too. Take a paw in your hand, curl your fingers into a fist, and use your thumb to gently press down on the joint just above the claw. When the claw extends, quickly but carefully snip off the sharp tip and no more.

Don't get too close to the pink part of the nail called "the quick," where blood vessels and nerve



Note: When working with a long-haired cat, be sure the fur is clear of the clippers or you may pull the animal's fur, hurting the cat and hurting your chances of ever trimming his nails again.



endings lie. Just like the pink part of a human fingernail, the quick is very sensitive; cutting into this area will likely hurt the animal and cause bleeding. If this happens, apply a little pressure to the very tip of the claw (without squeezing the entire paw, which would only increase the blood flow) or dip the claw in a bit of styptic powder, then leave the cat alone, being sure to check on him occasionally.

5: Take it One at a Time

If you aren't able to trim all 20 nails at once, don't worry. Few cats remain patient for more than a few minutes, so take what you can get, praise the animal for cooperating, then be on the lookout for the next opportunity—maybe even a catnap—to cut things down to size.

Food

Cats are true carnivores and need meat to survive. Dogs can actually live on a diet of all vegetables, but cats cannot. It is good to add canned food to your kitty's diet. Since cats are carnivores, canned food is more like their natural diet than dry. Most dry foods contain a higher amount of carbohydrates than cats need and can contribute to weight problems.

It's important that the first ingredient on the nutrition label of your dry food be meat (chicken, turkey, beef, lamb). The food manufacturer cannot list it that way unless meat is actually the first ingredient. The better the food you feed, the better your cats overall health will be.

Your average adult cat needs about $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup of food for the entire day. It should be split up into 2 feedings of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each. Give them $\frac{1}{4}$ in the am and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup in the evening. Be sure there is some food in their dish when everyone goes to bed so they don't wake you up to feed them in the middle of the night. If you are feeding a really good grain-free food, your cat may actually only need $\frac{1}{3}$ of cup of food for the entire day. This should also be split into 2 servings. The better the food, the less your cat needs as their bodies are using more of the food. The protein content is higher.

Your average KITTEN needs $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup of food for the day as they burn more calories than adults. Split it up into 2-3 feedings per day. Be sure there is some food in their dish when everyone goes to bed so they don't wake you up to feed them in the middle of the night.

Canned food is actually good for adults and kittens. It does not make them fat as the calories and carbohydrates are in the dry food, not the canned food. Two tablespoons or so at a scheduled time will be plenty for your cats. Cats love routine and will be at the feeding place waiting for their treats, they must have little kitty watches because they always know it's time for food!

If schedule feeding, put $\frac{1}{4}$ cup in the bowl and pick up whatever they don't eat in 15 or 20 minutes. Feed in morning, noon, evening and before bed.

FEED YOUR NEW KITTY THE VERY BEST FOOD YOU CAN AFFORD. The return on this investment will be priceless.

Oshkosh Area Humane Society
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920-303-3166

Behavioral Issues

OAHS is Here to Help!

If you ever have any questions regarding any behavior issues, please do not hesitate to call the staff at OAHS – most behavioral issues can be remedied with behavioral modification and training. We want to help keep your household a happy place for both pets and people.

Behavioral issues we can assist with include:

- Aggression towards people and pets
- Countertop jumping
- Nocturnal activities
- Moving with your cat
- Changes in routine
- Stressed cats – causes and fixes

Don't wait for a small problem to turn into a big problem – call us at 920.303-3166 with any questions or concerns you have.