



Cats: Indoors vs. Outdoors

While some cats are interested in the outside world, there are many things to consider before letting your cat outside. If you allow your cat to wander around outside on her own, without your supervision, she is susceptible many things she may not know are a threat to her health or wellbeing, such as:

- Cars and/or roads
- Poisons, such as antifreeze or pesticide
- Unhappy neighbors
- Diseases from other cats or wildlife
- Roaming dogs, cats, or other wild animals such as hawks, coyotes, bears, snakes, etc.
- Becoming lost and unable to find her way home
- Encountering an adult or child with cruel intentions

Benefits to Keeping Your Cat Indoors

There are many good reasons to keep your cat indoors. Some good reasons are:

- You are able to create a stronger bond with your cat. An indoor cat is easier to spend quality time with than an outdoor cat that comes and goes.
- Your cat is safe from outdoor incidents. There are many threatening and potentially fatal situations that your cat may encounter when roaming, like a car or another animal.
- Your cat will probably live longer! The average life span of an indoor cat is 12 to 20 years, versus 1 to 9 years for an outdoor cat.
- You can reinforce good litter box habits and catch any changes in elimination early to detect a possible disease or infection, such as straining to pee or blood in her urine.
- You can control what your cat eats, which will help manage her weight and prevent things like diarrhea from occurring.
- You can monitor your cat's health. Cats are good at hiding illnesses and injury. If you only see your cat from time to time, you may not notice if she has lost weight or if she isn't drinking enough water.

Keeping Cats Happy Indoors

To help her be a happy indoor cat, provide her with the following:

- Provide plenty of toys. By providing your cat with a variety of toys that she can chase, bat around, pounce on, and chew you can prevent boredom. She'll learn to love the indoors with all these fun things around!
- Provide scratching posts. Scratching is a normal cat behavior, which cats love to do, however when done on the carpet or furniture can be destructive. By providing a variety of scratching posts, including both horizontal and vertical options, you can prevent any destruction and allow her the chance to still stretch her muscles, mark her territory, and work off some energy.
- Provide a room with a view. Include perches in this room, so she can watch the birds and squirrels. Your cat will also enjoy sunning herself by the window.
- Provide her with some cat grass or cat nip. She will enjoy nibbling it and rolling in it.
- Teach your cat to walk on a harness and leash, so together you can enjoy the outdoors. A harness and leash will allow you to supervise yourcat when outdoors but keeps her safe from any dangers.

Revised: June 2020