

FELINE ESSENTIALS

Cats are naturally solitary survivors and do not need other cats to thrive. Young kittens that are raised with a littermate or housemates will often thrive together, as long as there are enough resources for each of them.

If you currently have one cat, do not adopt another cat as this may be upsetting and stressful. If you are considering adopting a young cat, it's encouraged to adopt a pair of cats of similar age and gender so they can meet each others social and emotional needs.

In order to create a safe and healthy environment for your cat(s) it's important to have multiple resources for each cat that are separate from the others. Provide appropriate enrichment such as species-appropriate play and consistent, positive human interactions.

Enrichment is the act of adding interesting things to our cats environment to promote species specific behaviors such as curiosity, hunting, exploring, climbing, scratching, hiding and scavenging. It challenges their brains, boosts confidence, enhances problem solving abilities and teaches them new skills.



FELINE ENRICHMENT



Bringing the Outdoors Inside: grab a cardboard box and place a few safe items from outside like pine cones, leaves, twigs, grass, logs, driftwood or a branch with leaves. You can even get a bin of sand, gravel or snow for some tactile sensory play. Throw some treats in the bin to encourage sniffing.

Visual Stimulation: Stimulate your cats predatory behavior by turning on Cat TV on. Place some interesting visualization on a TV or computer such as birds, squirrels, bugs or fish. This will make their day more interesting.



Hiding: Cats like to hide to feel safe and get away from others. Providing a cardboard box, cat cave, or opportunities to go under bed or in a closet are wonderful ideas. Make sure there are plenty of hiding places around the house separate from each other.

Climbing: Cats naturally seek elevated spots to climb in order to feel safe. Cat trees, bookshelves and wall climbers are all great ideas for places to climb. Each cat in the household should have their own special place to climb.



Hunting: Cats are active hunters! Food puzzles and toys are an excellent way to exercise the mind and body. A predatory play style may include stalking, chasing, biting and pouncing. A lack of hunting can be redirected towards humans if appropriate play outlets are not available.

FOOD PUZZLES FOR CATS



[Doc & Phoebe's Indoor Hunting Cat Feeder](#)



[PetFusion Ambush Interactive Toy](#)

[SmartyKat Twirly Top](#)



[Turntable Crazy Plate](#)

[SmartyKat Hot Pursuit](#)



Scratching: Cats will scratch to mark territory, stretch, to remove dead nails. Cats will also scratch when they are excited or feeling playful. It's important to give them appropriate tools to able to perform these behaviors. Some cats prefer vertical and/or horizontal scratchers. Scratching surfaces should be stable and atleast 3 feet long.

CAT SCRATCHING HANDOUT



Social Interaction: Cats are entirely dependent on their humans to provide a safe and appropriate environment to thrive. Avoid punishment and establish a routine of play and interaction. Positive interaction can include playing with a wand toy, pointers or balls. Avoid playing with your hands so cats can learn appropriate play. It's important for your cat to 'catch' the toy to avoid frustration. Cats are trainable and positive reinforcement gives cats the opportunity to perform behaviors for a desirable outcome.

PLAYING WITH YOUR CAT