



Cats and The Litter Box



"If only they knew my litter box puurrreference"

Cats do not ask for anything more than you would when it comes to a restroom. All that's required for most cats to use the litter box is a clean, quiet and private area.

Here's what your cat wants you to know about taking on the role as their restroom janitor:

- *Box type and litter.* Many people choose to suit their own litter box tastes which can conflict with the cat feels is an acceptable place to potty. A covered box may seem more pleasing on the eye to you, but your cat may think it's too stinky inside, or even scary. Sometimes even nicely scented litters (to your nose) may displease your feline. Start with the basics: a large uncovered box with unscented clumping-style litter.

- *Location.* Your cat's box should be away from their food and water, in a place they can get to easily and feel safe in. Consider a location from a cat's point of view: Choose a quiet and private spot where they can see what's coming. A cat doesn't want any surprises while he's in the potty.
- *Cleanliness matters.* Cats are tidy animals, and if the litter box is dirty, they look elsewhere for a place to go. Clean the box frequently (at least twice a day) and make sure it's completely scrubbed clean and aired out on a weekly to monthly basis. Having an additional litter box for EACH cat will help, too. Cats are not big on sharing their potty space! We recommend the plus ONE system, totaling the number of cats you have, providing each a litter box PLUS one extra. For example, 3 cats would mean 4 litter boxes; 2 cats would mean 3 litter boxes.

If you are introducing a new kitten to the house, you may want to start by keeping your kitty in a small area, such as a guest bathroom or small bedroom, for a couple of weeks. Make sure they have a place to sleep, possibly some toys, and their food and water on the opposite end of the room from the litter box. Lastly, make sure the litter box area does not give your kitten other potty options such as a pile of dirty laundry. If using a bathroom, keep an inch of water in the tub to discourage the use of it as a restroom. After your kitten is reliably using the litter box, let them slowly expand territory to the rest of your house. As long as you keep up your end of the bargain and keep the litter box clean and safe, you have an excellent chance that the good potty behavior will become permanent.



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If you are having litter box problems, you want to make sure it's not a medical condition. Urinary tract infections and diseases such as diabetes make consistent litter box use impossible for even the most well-intentioned cat. Schedule an appointment with your veterinarian if you notice a change in volume or frequency in your cat's urination, straining to eliminate in any way, or any discomfort associated with eliminating. A cat that is straining or unable to urinate is a medical emergency!

You can make the area where your cat has had any potty mistakes less attractive by cleaning it thoroughly with a pet-odor neutralizer. Discourage them from coming back to the area to potty by covering the area with foil, plastic sheeting or plastic carpet runners with the points up.

Happy litter boxing!