



CAT-PROOFING YOUR HOME

Basics

- Breakables. Put away any breakable treasures that are remotely accessible to your cat. Remember that adult cats can and will jump onto shelves and counters, and some are even adept at opening cupboards and doors.
- Destroyables. Cover cloth furniture with a blanket or a bedspread, and keep drapes off-limits by tying them up and out of reach of your cats to prevent damage from clawing and climbing. With time, your cats will learn what is and is not allowed, but until then, drapes and furniture remain tempting “scratching posts.”
- Windows. Ensure that all windows are screened with pet-proof screening material and that the screens are secure. Windows are the equivalent of kitty television for your cats, but some intrepid cats have been known to tear holes in screens and escape in order to get a closer look at the flora and fauna.
- Poisonous Plants / Household Chemicals. Remove or make inaccessible common household chemicals (if they're bad for humans, chances are they are bad for cats) and plants. In general, garages contain many of these chemicals and best practice suggests keeping the garage off-limits to your cats. While cats love to play with plants or “investigate” spills and smells that are new to them, many chemicals and plants are poisonous and can be fatal, so be sure to check that your plants are not on the “Poisonous Plant” list.
- Cords. Anchor or tie up any hanging blinds cords, electrical cords (including irons), and phone cords. If this does not work, spray the cords with Bitter Apple, a very unpleasant tasting but harmless substance. Cats may love to play with dangling items, but they can get tangled up in them or bite through them with sometimes fatal consequences.
- Appliances. Take care that your cat does not sneak into the refrigerator, washer, dryer or dishwasher. Cats love climbing into everything – and nothing is more tempting than a slightly open door.
- Small Hazards. Check for and remove unstored or loose rubber bands, paper clips, thumb tacks, broken balloons, Christmas tree tinsel and other small articles that could be choking hazards. A good rule of thumb is to put away anything you would not want a toddler to play with – and for the same reasons. Although your cat may find these irresistible toys, it is best to avoid those toys that may harm your cat.
- Garage. Vets now recommend feeding cats both wet and dry food. When choosing food products, avoid those with “meat by-products” of any animal and / or corn in the ingredient list.

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list of cat-proofing ideas. No home can be completely free of all hazards, but if you use common sense, you should be able to minimize the risks to your cats. You will be rewarded for your caring attitude and hard work with a kitten that remains happy and healthy.