

YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND: LITTER BOX TIPS

Unlike house-training a dog, litter training a cat is usually very easy! You will want to start as soon as possible with your new kitten or cat, but often cats have inherent preferences to use a litter box as they are tidy animals by nature and prefer to bury their waste.

Training a kitten: Place the litter box in a quiet area of your home. Use clumping litter as that will be the neatest for everyone involved. You may need to experiment with different textures, especially with older cats, as sometimes cats develop texture preferences. When training a kitten, leave a small amount of urine and feces in the litter box so they can smell it and know what to do. Place your kitten in the box after eating, playing, and waking up. If you notice her scratching the floor or searching intently for something, place them in the box as they likely need to go. It might be easiest to confine your kitten to a small room while they are still learning. When the kitten is fully trained, you can start cleaning the box completely and letting them explore more of the house.

Litter box smells: Cats don't like a stinky box, either, so it's important to keep things tidy.

- Clean the box daily, or more often if you have multiple cats. This also helps you keep an eye on bathroom habits, which are often the first sign of illness.
- Sprinkle baking soda on the bottom of the box before you add litter to help block smells.
- Use a covered litter box. This also creates an extra sense a privacy, which many cats enjoy.
- Place the litter box in a room like a bathroom or laundry room, without much carpet or furniture to trap smells.
- Try an enclosed litter box "cabinet", especially if you live in a small apartment. Pet stores often sell furniture that looks like a cabinet but is designed to store a litter box and other cat supplies.

Other litter box tips:

- If you have a large home or multiple cats, it is important to have multiple litter boxes in different areas of the house.
- Most cats prefer a shallow bed of litter, around 1-2". This also helps it stay cleaner as you won't be digging through deep litter.
- Most cats don't like liners in their litter box.

If your cat is not using her litter box, it could be a sign of a health problem. Urinary tract infections are common in cats and can be deadly, so if your cat suddenly stops using her box, your first step should be to take her to the vet.

Do not:

- rub your cat's nose in their urine or feces
- scold your cat or carry/drag them to their box
- clean up accidents with ammonia-based cleaner (urine contains ammonia and these cleaning products will attract your cat to the same spots to urine again)

If you are still having problems, contact us and we will help you troubleshoot.

