

# **The Indoor Life**



## **Tips and Advice for Keeping Your Indoor Cat Happy & Healthy for Life**



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# The First Step

Deciding to keep your cat indoors may at first seem like a difficult decision, but it is one of the best choices you can make for your cat.

Your cat may tell you the great outdoors is a lot of fun - grass to roll in, trees to climb however, cats, like children, depend on us to recognise danger and protect them from harm.

In addition to grass and fresh air, the outdoors poses many risks to your cats lethal risks that can be completely avoided.

**TRAFFIC:** To listen to some people, getting hit by a car is just part of cat ownership. Your cat is not likely to agree.

**POISON:** Cats don't usually resist the temptation of checking out other people's gardens, and although it is illegal and inhumane, some people put out poisonous substances to get rid of those paw prints on a car, or droppings in their flower beds. Poison may also be put out for other animals, and cats are accidentally poisoned, such as by eating poisoned prey.

**CRUELTY:** Unfortunate, but true, there are more than enough people in this world who are intentionally cruel to animals.

**INJURIES:** If your cat goes outside, he risks injurious or deadly fights with other animals. Bite wounds often abscess, resulting in a serious injury for your pet, and a large vets bill for you.

**DISEASE:** FIV - Feline Immunodeficiency Virus - is a disease that compromises the immune system of the cat. There is no vaccine for FIV, and there is no cure. FIV is generally transmitted between cats by biting and a blood test determines if a cat is FI positive. Scientific evidence indicates FIV is not communicable to humans. Sadly, a number of stray and feral cats are FIV positive, and your cat runs a significant risk of contact with these outdoor cats. For more information regarding FIV, contact your vet.

No cat, no community, is immune from these dangers. Give your cat a long, safe, healthy life - indoors!

## Health

Because your cat is indoors, you will spot any changes in his health straight away which will mean that timely visits to the vet can prevent unnecessary suffering and complications.

Sometimes it may be necessary for a cat who previously went outside, to become an indoor cat on veterinary advice, but if this happens it needn't be a problem, as like all indoor living cats, your cat will adapt to his new way of life. The length of time this takes will vary from cat to cat, but your patience and reassurance will help your cat over this transitional period.



Giving him the free run of his home, and your kind and caring attention, will ensure his emotional wellbeing and help to avoid any issues of fretfulness.

## Indoors is Fun!

Making sure your cat has a fun and happy life indoors is easy. Plenty of toys, playtime with you, a window to look out of and scratching posts, more than compensate for the risks your cat faces outside.

Most indoor cats are far more contented with a companion or even two. However, this obviously depends on the personality of your cat and how long they are left alone, but generally, a friend to cuddle and play with will ensure his health and happiness long term and avoid stress and anxiety.



## Everyday Life

You need only to look on the supermarket shelves to see the huge range of different litters available. The choice is yours, but ensuring your cat has a quiet and private place to go to the toilet is important for his wellbeing. Ideal spots for your cat's litter tray are the utility room or bathroom (we go to the loo in there )



A covered litter tray is always best and there are many on the market to choose from.

Tip: remove the flap as this will prevent your cat from feeling vulnerable or trapped inside.

Two cats will happily use one litter box, but you may wish to provide them with two. Multi cat households of three or four, will require at least two litters, so make sure you have enough room where they will be kept.



Keeping your cat's mealtimes as regular as possible is recommended.

Feed good quality soft or fresh food and provide a few biscuits as a "nibble" between meals (but not too many!)

Always make sure your cat has adequate fresh water, and one of the many cat water fountains that are available will give him a clean flowing drink whenever he needs it.

Your indoor cat's body clock will soon match yours. When you go to bed, so will he and he will be ready for his breakfast when you are. He will be waiting to greet you when you come home from work and to help you unpack the shopping!

## **Safety Indoors**

This cannot be stressed enough as we all know that accidents can happen in the home, but a little attention to detail can avoid any potential pitfalls

Always make sure that heavy objects are secure - we all know that cats like to climb and to sit in the strangest of places.

Check that any sharp items such as knives and scissors are safely put away, and any ornaments with spiked or sharp edges are positioned safely.



Wires can be a problem especially with young, inquisitive cats, but cable tidies are thankfully inexpensive!

## **Windows and Doors**

Summertime brings the issue of window opening to the fore. It is paramount that open windows and doors are screened as an indoor cat who finds himself outside is extremely vulnerable.

However, this need not be a problem as there are companies who make window screens to keep your cat safe such as [www.flat-cats.co.uk](http://www.flat-cats.co.uk). You can, if you wish, make your own screens with steel or strong flexible mesh and simple turnbuckle or hook fixings, or industrial strength Velcro for UPVC.

For doors the following company supply a rigid, pet safe door screen [www.doorflyscreensuk.co.uk](http://www.doorflyscreensuk.co.uk), and there are other manufacturers and suppliers available.

Indoors, should mean indoors. It is not best for your cat to have a little bit of time outside as this confuses and increases the risk of losing your cat, either when you open the door, or from the garden. If you are able to build a secure run for him that is accessible via a catflap or house door, that is acceptable and safe.

## Enough Space



One of the most frequently asked questions is about the size of home needed to keep indoor cats. Where it is obviously not advisable to keep six cats in a small flat, two will live very happily in such a situation.

Remember that cats like multiple levels, so as long as they have the means to climb or to sit somewhere high, a large home is not necessary

Visit [zooplus.co.uk](http://zooplus.co.uk) for a great range of cat trees and scratching posts.



Indoor cats generally live longer, happier, healthier and safer lives and we enjoy a closer, more intimate relationship with them.



Our lives are forever enriched by this.