

Prevent Your Cat from Scratching the Furniture

Cats are playful creatures, and they are extremely curious. Your furniture and home can be protected from consequences of their natural curiosity and play, but it will require patience and training from you.

- Be sure that you give your cat plenty of suitable and safe toys and play areas such as kitty condos, cardboard boxes and paper bags, balls, and stuffed toys.
- Divert their natural tendency to roughhouse with your hands and feet by distracting them with toys instead. Many cats enjoy 'fishing pole' toys that can be found at pet stores, or inexpensive substitutes for toys such as wine bottle corks, straws, small stuffed animals, and ping pong balls.
- If your cat's curiosity is so strong that it leads her into cabinet doors or other areas of the home that may be hazardous, take steps to discourage her exploration. Shut doors to rooms or barricade areas. Install child-proof locks on cabinet doors.

Cats need to scratch. Not only is scratching a way for cats to announce their territory and shed their claws, it is how they stretch, and an important part of exercise.

- Discourage your cat from scratching areas you don't want scratched by covering those surfaces with tin foil or double-sided tape.
- Don't physically punish your pet for scratching an inappropriate surface; instead, make a loud noise when the cat is scratching areas you don't want her to scratch. Physical punishment often backfires by making your pet afraid of you, causing them to avoid that area only when you're watching.