

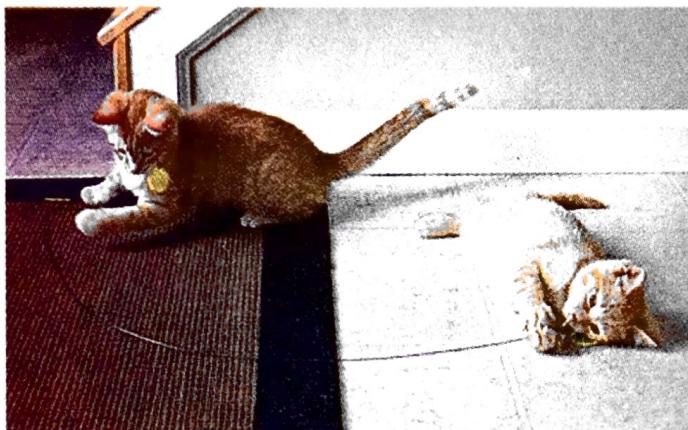
How to keep your CAT HAPPY

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Your feline friend is an indoor cat because you know she's much safer that way, but do you worry that she gets bored, especially when you're not at home? Try several of these tips, and you'll be rewarded with a happier, healthier kitty.

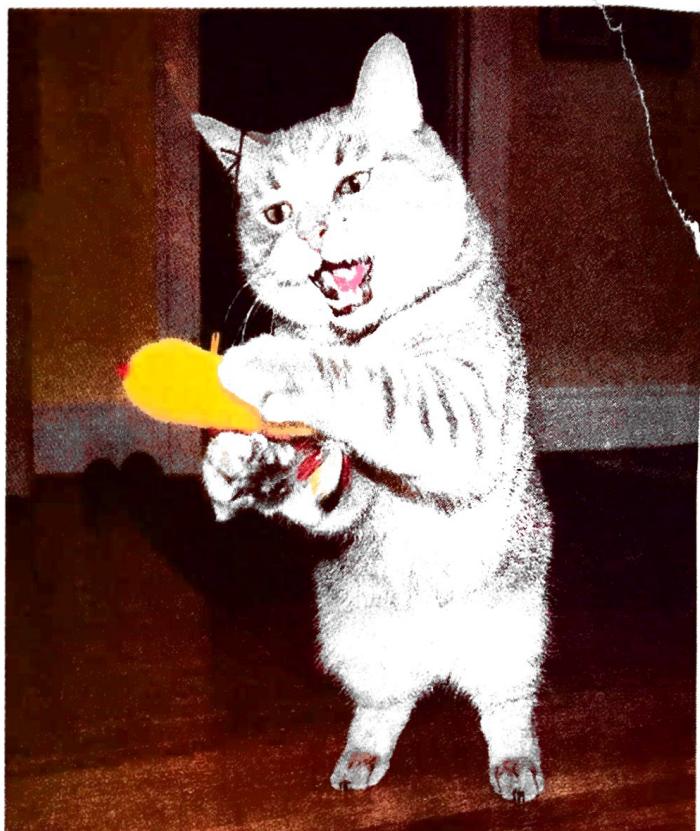
Create a cat playground. Catnip mice, bouncy balls, feather toys, laser pointers... a trip to the store will reveal more toys than your cat could possibly use. Many cats also like items that don't cost a thing—crinkled-up paper or foil, cardboard boxes, paper bags, or pieces of yarn. (Just make sure never to leave your cat alone with yarn or string; he might swallow them.) Rotate toys to keep things interesting.



Provide acceptable places for scratching. If you don't want your cat shredding your sofa, placing several scratching posts around the house is a good strategy. Some cats prefer carpet-covered scratchers, others choose cardboard, and some like sisal. Vertical scratching posts should be sturdy and tall enough for your cat to stretch to his full height.

Offer up a cat's-eye view. Cats love to hang out in high places, and cat trees, wall shelves, and carpeted windowsill perches give them great vantage points. You can buy these items at the store or even make your own!

Turn on the TV. You can find DVDs made just for kitty audiences at pet-supply stores and on pet-product websites. Seeing feathered and furry critters up close and personal will keep many cats entertained for long periods. Otherwise, you can leave the TV or radio on for your cat if you think that he's lonely when you're not home.



Bring home a friend. Your single cat might love to live with another kitty—a readymade playmate, grooming partner, and nap companion. Lollypop Farm has many cats available for adoption who have lived successfully with other cats before, and we have felines of all sizes, colors, and personalities.

Challenge his mind. Although cats seem to sleep most of the day away, you can exercise their kitty brains while they're up and about. Did you know that cats, like dogs, can be clicker-trained? (Check out www.clickertraining.com/cattraining for tips.) You can also try teaching your cat tricks and games, like fetch. Some cats are even willing to walk on a leash and harness outdoors!

Give a taste of nature. Buy a container of "cat grass" or catnip—or grow your own at home—and let your cat munch away. You can also bring inside a section of tree branch thick enough for your cat to scratch. Some cats seem to prefer objects with natural textures to store-bought scratchers.

Spend time together. Quality time with your pet is important, so brush your cat, play with him, and talk to him, too. If you work all day, schedule a play session in the evening. It may prevent him from waking you up in the middle of the night in the hopes that you'll be up for some laser-pointer action.

Make mealtimes more interesting.

You can appeal to a cat's hunting instincts by placing some of his dry food inside his bowl and the rest of it throughout the house so that he can discover the pieces in different hiding places. As your cat gets better at the game, choose trickier spots.

Help your cat be a cat. You've probably noticed that kitties love to hide. You can make this instinct easier for them to fulfill with play tunnels and cubes, cardboard boxes and paper bags, and cat beds with tops.

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