

INDOOR CAT BENEFITS

Statistics indicate that the life span of an indoor cat is much longer than an outdoor cat. On average, an indoor cat can live up to 12-20 years. In comparison, an outdoor cat's life expectancy is less than 5 years.

The pros of keeping a cat indoors far outnumber the cons of an indoor cat. Most are directly related to the health & safety of the cat. Outdoors, cats can be subjected to:

- Traffic incidents
- Poisoning (such as pesticides, litter, car/motor products, plants, or even intentional poisonings)
- Infectious diseases or parasites from other roaming animals
- Predatory animals (such as coyotes, aggressive dogs, owls, hawks)
- Being stolen



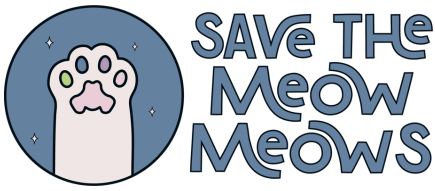
Roaming cats also negatively affect the ecosystem, killing off small wildlife & destroying plant life.

Outdoors cats are more prone to becoming lost. Less than 5% of cats taken to animal shelters are reclaimed by owners. While outdoor cats should wear safety collars with identifying information - collars often become lost. The majority of veterinarians believe cats should be indoor pets. So do members of most Humane Societies and animal protection societies. Dangers to an outdoor cat far outweigh any benefits and responsible cat owners are urged to do what is best for the cat.



“But Indoor Cats Are Bored!”

There are plenty of fun ways to keep indoor cats enriched and entertained from the safety of their home!



INDOOR CAT ENRICHMENT

It's a myth that going outside is a requirement for feline happiness. Playing regularly with a cat and providing entertaining toys can easily satisfy their stalking instinct, keep them stimulated and provide the exercise they need to stay healthy and happy. It also keeps local wildlife safe!

Cat Trees

Providing climbing opportunities, especially in multi-cat households, creates more play and rest areas by taking advantage of vertical space. If you can, place the cat tree (or condo) next to a window so your cat can watch the action outdoors. Cat trees fulfill natural instincts to climb, scratch, and observe from high places, which provides them with a sense of safety, exercise, and mental stimulation.

Playtime

Play with your cat each day. Try different types of toys that allow your cat to stalk, chase, pounce and kick. When you've tired your cat out, store toys that could harm them (such as toys with strings attached) out of reach. When you can't be there to supervise, leave out "toys" such as paper bags (with the handles removed) or cardboard boxes. Be sure to switch the toys from time to time so that they seem "new" and more interesting to your cat.

“Outdoors” from Inside

- Plant cat grass (available from pet supply stores) in indoor pots so your feline can graze.
- Cat tv or window bird feeders can provide hunting stimulation.
- Catos or cat patios — screened porches designed for cats provide enrichment and a (safe) way to spend time in nature. An outdoor enclosure for cats can be as simple as a window box or as elaborate as a room with a floor, a roof and furniture for people and pets.

Harness Training

Harness training a cat might seem like an impossible feat, but with a little love and patience, your kitty will be prepared for a safe outdoor adventure in no time. Familiarize your cat with the harness through positive reinforcement, such as leaving it in their favorite spot and giving treats. Next, gently put the harness on for short periods, pairing it with treats, feeding, or playing, and gradually increase the time they wear it. Finally, attach the leash and allow the cat to drag it inside before you begin to gently guide them on short indoor walks to get them comfortable with the leash and a small amount of directing their movement. Then you can start with very short trips just outside the door to help them get accustomed to the outdoors.

