

Kitty Playtime Toys & Scratching Posts

Playtime is fun for cat and human, and it's a great way to ensure that your cat gets important exercise! Safe play involves a few common sense precautions; If you notice your cat breathing heavily or panting, stop playing until her breathing returns to normal. Don't use dangerous toys or encourage your cat to play with items that you may not want them to later (eg your hands). Do not leave toys out that your cat could choke on or swallow – this includes any string or toy containing string, elastic parts, or small possibly detachable parts. Never let your cat play with rubber bands or items smaller than a ping-pong ball. Do not leave string, yarn, or thread out, if swallowed it can wrap around intestines, requiring expensive and dangerous surgery.

Safe toys for supervised play (lock away when not in use) : Feather wands, laser pointer (don't shine in eyes), Cat Dancer, fabric Cat Teaser

Safe toys for unsupervised play: Ping pong balls or other large solid plastic balls (no superballs!) stuffed catnip mice with no removable parts, (remove jingle bells from end of tails if equipped, cat may chew them off and choke), Kong toys.

Unsafe toys: Do not allow your kitten or cat to play with ribbons, string, small balls that can fit in their mouth (choking hazard), paperclips, thumbtacks, rubber bands, any toys that have unsecured parts that can be chewed off and swallowed or choked on. Costly surgery and sometimes death can be the result of not properly kitten or cat-proofing your home!

Scratching Posts and Cat Trees

Cats scratch surfaces as a way of marking territory and to remove old claw sheaths. It is a natural part of cat behavior, and must be accepted as such. In order to avoid the destruction of furniture or carpets, immediately provide your cat with her own scratching surface. You may need to try several types to find out which one she prefers.

Some variants are; sisal rope, wood, carpet, and cardboard. Catnip can be used to attract cats to the scratching post. If you provide a few choices your cat will be less likely to go for the furniture. We highly recommend a tall post covered with woven sisal (better than sisal rope) and provides both vertical and horizontal surfaces. It will last a lifetime and is an attractive piece of furniture with real wood trim. Cats go crazy over this kind of post!

Most cats prefer a tall, vertical surface to stretch up against and scratch. You can construct a simple "cat tree" by screwing a 3' post to a 2' by 2' square heavy plywood base. The post can be left bare or covered with carpet or wrapped with woven sisal. Sisal remnants can be purchased from rug makers. If you make

your own post with carpet, be sure to melt the edges of the carpet to prevent unraveling, swallowing long strings from unraveled carpet has sent more than one cat to hospital for expensive surgery. Check out the internet for plans for building cat trees.

If your cat still goes for the furniture, place double-sided carpet tape (sold in pet stores as Sticky Paws, which is clear and removes easily from the surface) in the place she scratches. Cats don't like the sticky sensation. Place a suitable post right beside the place she scratches and praise her when she uses it. Never chase her or yell at her when she scratches furniture, she'll just associate the punishment with you and see it as a territory challenge, and may end up scratching more! Cat repellent sprays hardly ever work.