

THINK INSIDE THE BOX

Resolving common litter box avoidance issues

1ST

RULE OUT MEDICAL ISSUES

If your cat is having "accidents" outside of the litter box, the first step is to make sure that he/she does not have an underlying medical condition. Make an appointment with your cat's veterinarian to have your cat thoroughly examined and tested to rule out medical causes.

NEXT THINK....C.A.T.S.

If your veterinarian gives your cat a clean bill of health, the problem may be in the environment or something else causing the cat stress. Think about these potential reasons that your cat might be avoiding the litter box:

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If the litter you are using is uncomfortable for your cats paws, if there is too much or too little, or if it has a strong perfume-y smell, your cat may be avoiding the box. Fine grain scoopable litters with no added scents tend to be most acceptable to cats. Litter should be 1-2 inches deep so your cat can dig and cover.

ACCESS

A

Where is the box and how many are there? Litter boxes inside furniture or in a dark corner may give a cat the feeling of being trapped. If there is only one box in the basement and you have a three-story house, that's a long way to go.

Have a box on each level of the house if possible. The more cats you have, the more boxes you should have; at least as many boxes as cats...ideally one extra. Also, make sure there are two ways to enter and exit the box, especially if you have another pet in the house.

T

TIDINESS

Cats are naturally clean creatures. They don't like a dirty potty place. Feces and urine should be scooped from the box daily to ensure that your cat won't mind going into the box. This is especially true if you use a covered box in which smelly odors get trapped.

S

SIZE

For your cat to have enough space for movement and posturing to eliminate, the litter box should be 1.5 times his/her body length including the tail! Most commercial cat litter boxes are much too small for adult cats. Use an under-the-bed plastic storage bin as a better-sized alternative.

By Your Side
Pet Behavior

CONSULTING & TRAINING



STILL NEED HELP GETTING YOUR CAT BACK IN THE BOX?
HELP IS JUST AN EMAIL AWAY...
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