



METRO NASHVILLE
ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL

Litter Box Success

All indoor cats need access to a litterbox, and most cats have a strong desire to use the litterbox, which they learn from a young age. When you first bring home your cat or kitten, they should be confined to one room where the litterbox is easy to access.

Scoop the litterbox daily. Keep in mind that cats won't use a messy, smelly litter box, so scoop solid wastes out of the box at least once a day. Dump everything, wash with a mild detergent and refill at least once a week; you can do this less frequently if using clumping litter. Don't use ammonia, deodorants or scents, especially lemon, when cleaning the litter box.

There is proper litter box etiquette and a correct way to set-up your cat's litter box to prevent avoidance. This affects the mannerism in which your cat relates to this territory. If your cat isn't going in the litter box, it might be time to take a closer look at their current litter box situation and consult your veterinarian for a medical exam. Here are some basic rules.

One litter box plus one extra box for each cat. Your cat should have more than one place to do his/her business. Make sure the litter boxes are placed in different areas of your home.

Place litter boxes in separate, socially important areas. Litter boxes should not be placed next to laundry machines or placed in a dark corner in the basement, garage, or hidden. If your cat is marking outside the litter box, it's important to put the boxes places where they are marking. Litter boxes should be placed in areas where your cat spends most of their time (if your cat loves to hang out in the living room, then that's where one of the litter boxes should be). Keeping litter boxes out in the open might not be your ideal scenario, but it's ideal for your cat, and it can prevent and solve litter box issues. If you have multiple cats, do not place the boxes side-by-side; they should be separated in different low-traffic areas.

Your litter box should have multiple exits. Cats need an escape route since they don't like to feel cornered or trapped. If you have multiple animals in your home, and cats are approached while in the litter box, they don't have a way out. One bad litter box experience can cause a cat to abandon the box. If your only litter box is a deep box with one entrance, add a shallower one with multiple exits and/or an open pan (no lid) to your cat's repertoire, and eventually try to replace them.

If you need more help managing your cat's litter box issues:

<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/cat-care/common-cat-behavior-issues/litter-box-problems>

<https://www.jacksongalaxy.com/blog/>