

# Litter Box Care

**One of the most important components of cat care is providing an appropriate litter box for your cat and caring for the litter box for your cat's comfort.**

If you do not provide your cat a clean litter box of the appropriate size and in a good location there is an increased risk that your cat will find alternative locations to go to the bathroom. If your cat isn't using the litter



box, please make schedule an appointment with a veterinarian to make sure your cat doesn't have a medical condition causing inappropriate urination.

## **Guidelines for the best litter box care:**

**Location:** The litter box should be easily accessible for the cat. It should not be located in a closed in space. It is best to provide more than one location in the household for litter boxes. Consider having one on each floor if space allows. Avoid moving boxes around. Avoid rooms with noisy equipment, such as furnaces or washing machines, when selecting the room for the litter box. The noises may frighten your cat. Make sure that there is at least 5 feet between the litter box and the cat's food and water.

**If your cat isn't using the litter box, please make schedule an appointment with a veterinarian to make sure your cat doesn't have a medical condition causing inappropriate urination.**

**Depth Matters:** Most cats prefer 1 to 1.5 inches of litter depth. Some cats may prefer litter to be deeper. When experimenting with different depths, add a new litter box to see which depth your cat prefers.

**Size:** The rule of thumb is that the best litter box is 1.5 times as long as your cat is from nose to tail. Some cats need to be able to move around in the litter box in order to use it. Older cats may need boxes with lower walls to more easily climb over them.

**Number of boxes:** Provide one litter box per cat PLUS one.

**Litter type:** Studies show that cats prefer unscented clumping litter as this is closest in texture to sandbox sand. Scented litter can be offensive to cats as their sense of smell is significantly more sensitive than human's sense of smell. Cats prefer clay clumping litter to corn, wheat or paper litters. Cats may tolerate these types of litters but they are not preferred.

**Keep it Open:** Cats generally do not feel comfortable in covered boxes. It is best to remove any covers from boxes. Some owners do prefer boxes with high sides to cases when the cat urinates while standing (sprays the wall) or scratches in the litter and throws litter. In these cases, a storage tub can be used without the lid and a hole cut into the side to allow the cat to enter.

**Keep it Clean:** Scoop the litter box once to twice daily. The more often the box is cleaned, the happier the cat. The litter box should be completely emptied every one to two weeks. The box should be cleaned with a mild detergent, rinsed well and allowed to dry before adding more litter.



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