

## THE CAT AND THE BUSY OWNER

Cats are more independent and solitary animals than most other kinds of pets and require less attention. Therefore they are suitable pets for the busy owner. They are clean, quiet and adapt well to any environment. They can also be loving and good company.

During any given 24-hour period cats can spend more than 80% of their time resting. And being nocturnal, they are most active at night. You should therefore not worry about leaving your cat alone when you go to work. Some cats may like the companionship of other cats or animals, so you may want to keep other pets. You should however be sensible and keep only the types and number of pets that you can handle. Besides, your neighbours may not appreciate a mini-menagerie next door.



## CATS MAKE GOOD INDOOR PETS

Cats do perfectly well in a confined environment so long as all their basic needs (i.e. food and water, shelter, a comfortable living environment and veterinary care) are provided. This is quite contrary to the popular belief that cats can only be happy and contented if they are free to wander outdoors.

## THE INDOOR CAT IS BETTER PROTECTED

A cat that is confined indoors is better protected. It will not have to face dangerous situations like being run over by vehicles, mauled by dogs, getting into fights with other cats or contracting potentially life-threatening and debilitating infectious diseases.

## CATS DO NOT NEED TO WANDER

Some cat owners allow their pets to wander because they feel that it is cruel and unnatural to confine a cat. They feel that the cat will not be happy if confined. This is a misconception. The cat owner who insists on continuing to hold this belief is not looking after the best welfare of his / her pet. If we allow our pet cat to wander freely we not only

expose it to the dangers mentioned earlier

(i.e. accidents, fights and

infectious diseases)

but it could also

cause strained

relationships with

our neighbours

which could

result in disputes

over the keeping

of our pet cat. In our

urban environment where we live in very close proximity to each other, we should not allow our activities and lifestyle to inconvenience our neighbours.

## BEING A RESPONSIBLE CAT OWNER MEANS:

- providing all its basic needs, i.e. shelter, proper food and water, opportunity for normal activity and exercise, and veterinary care
- ensuring that it receives its vaccinations against common feline infectious diseases
- ensuring that it is treated against internal parasites like roundworm, hookworm and tapeworm

- ensuring that it is treated against external parasites like fleas or fur and ear mites
- training it to use the litter box if you live in an apartment or do not have a garden in which your cat can do its business
- providing it with play objects such as toys and a scratch post so that it can entertain and occupy itself when you are not at home. A good scratch post will also help to keep your cat away from your furniture
- getting it sterilised after it reaches 6 months of age (see the leaflet on sterilisation). This will prevent your pet from having unwanted litters and also make it a better and healthier pet. A sterilised cat will not mate and will not caterwaul. The sterilised male cat will not spray urine as indiscriminately and the smell of the urine is less strong. The sterilised female cat will not have womb infections and is less likely to get mammary cancers
- ensuring that your house is safe for your cat. If you live in a highrise apartment you should take steps to ensure that your cat does not fall off the building. You should consider putting up a grill and / or make the ledge wider.  
Cats are curious and playful and like to chase



and swat at moving objects, so you should not place items like wind chimes above or near the balcony ledge. Avoid placing flowering plants / lights at or on the ledge as your cat may fall off the ledge while chasing flying insects attracted to the plants or lights

- spending quality time with your cat when you are home. Cats can be very loving and will enjoy the attention and opportunity for interaction
- taking necessary steps to prevent your cat from wandering. You could put up grills on your doors and windows so that your cat cannot leave the premises unsupervised. You could also consider keeping it in a suitable cage or enclosure that offers comfortable, split-level housing
- never abandoning your cat.



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# CATS AS PETS