

# How to Be a Better Cat Owner

(Written by: PetPlace.com Veterinarians Last Modified: March 16, 2015)

There are some things you can do to be a better cat owner. As a benefit, you most likely will have a happier and healthier cat!

- 1. Spend more time with your cat** – Just spending some quiet time before work, after work or midday, will make a big difference. Cats love to be talked to and made to feel important.
- 2. Groom – Most cats like to be groomed or brushed.** - This also stimulates the skin and gets rid of dead hair. Regular grooming will also help keep your house cleaner from less shedding hair.
- 3. Play** – Play is good for both you and your cat!
- 4. Understand your cat** – Know his or her favorite type of play and their favorite time of day to play versus rest.
- 5. Feed a consistent diet** – Use a high quality food with AAFCO approval formulated for your cats' life stage. Supplement with healthy treats only in moderation.
- 6. Supply plenty of fresh water at all times** - Clean the water bowl once daily and make sure it is always full.
- 7. Provide a comfortable place to sleep** – Whether inside or out, your cat should have a comfortable place to sleep.
- 8. Carefully choose toys for safety** – Not just any toy will do. You really need to consider safety issues when choosing toys for your cat. For example, are there any parts that can be torn off and swallowed? Is it something he or she might "eat" thus causing a possible intestinal foreign body that could require surgery? Will it please your cat? Choose toys that cannot be chewed or swallowed. Small fur mice, round balls, or feather teasers are great interactive toys. Also, a laser pointer can be fun!
- 9. Supervise** – Always keep a watchful eye on your cat for dangerous or destructive behaviors.
- 10. Exercise** – Daily exercise will keep your cat fit. Additional exercise can help with some behavior problems as well.
- 11. Don't let your cat get fat** – Adjust food intake for body type, provide healthy treats, and exercise regularly to avoid extra weight gain.
- 12. Be observant** – Monitor absolutely everything your cat does. For example, did he eat all his food today? Has he been drinking? Was his urine and bowel movement normal? Is his activity

level the same? How does he look? Is his hair coat okay? If you cat him, do you feel any abnormal lumps? Have you seen any coughing or vomiting? Early recognition of symptoms can save your cats life.

**13. Visit your veterinarian regularly** – Be sure maintain an appropriate schedule of wellness and recheck appointments. Your cat's needs may continue to change depending on their life stage or health conditions.

**14. Do not use plastic food and water bowls- Pottery type is BEST!**

**15. Have multiple, tall scratching posts available.**

**16. TOYS!....**Cats love to play with safe toys. Ping pong balls, mousies, and other toys that don't have parts that a cat can swallow (feathers, etc.). Catnip-purchase only what is grown in the US.