

Getting Your Cat to Come to You

Unlike dogs and children, cats are unlikely to come to you just because you want them to obey. However, a cat who knows he will be warmly petted, brushed, will receive a treat, or an extended period of lap-napping, is more likely to get up, stretch, look casually around, and then wander over to you (displaying, for all intents and purposes, the attitude that it was his idea in the first place). No animal will come to you willingly if you are raising your voice or if they think they are going to be punished.

Cats, by the way, respond best to names that end in an "ee" sound. You will most likely get a better response if you shorten Prince Zadrach of Dominquez' name to Zaddy, for example. Too, they seem to respond better to a higher-pitched tone of voice.

The Carpet

A few owners have a problem with their cat shredding the carpet, even with a convenient scratching post. First, look at [the scratching post](#) from a cat's viewpoint: it's covered with carpet this stuff on the floor has the same feel. Hmm... Since it's less costly to replace the scratching post than the carpeting, try getting a post that is covered with sisal fabric or rope, corrugated cardboard, or carpet turned wrong-way out.

If the cat is always scratching (or worse) at a particular spot in the carpeting, the reason might be due to a strong smell in that one spot - go to the vet or pet store and get an enzymatic cleaner specific for pet smells, then clean it thoroughly

Scratching Furniture/Declawing

First, please note that declawing your cat so he won't scratch your furniture is cruel and inhumane. It is the equivalent of cutting off your finger up to the first knuckle. There can be serious physical and psychological effects.

Instead, you should train your cat to use a scratching post. Other alternatives include a quick, painless trimming of his claws (which you can do at home using special clippers) or covering the claws with soft sheaths (which you can purchase relatively inexpensively).

Scratching is one of your cat's most ingrained instincts. Keep a scratching post near where the cat usually sleeps or, if he has already picked out a corner of your sofa, keep it next to that chosen spot. You may need to train your cat to use his scratching post. **Do not** pick him up and put his paws on the scratching post (that will only make him want to avoid it). Make the scratching post appealing to him: rub catnip on it or mist it with catnip spray; drape a heavy string (a long leather shoelace works great) over it and wiggle it to catch his interest; put treats on the very top.



Important: Invest in a scratching post that is 24" or 30" tall, with a sturdy base - your cat may be using the arm of the sofa because he can stretch higher than his scratching post will allow. Most of the ones you will find at the store are only 18" high so you may need to visit a pet supply store.

I recently found THE best scratching post for our cats! It's made out of rough sisal (NOT the rope, a weave!). It's tall (29 inches), doesn't fall over, doesn't wobble, and doesn't slide across the floor. And, of course, the best part: all the cats love it. It's called the [TopCat Sisal Scratching Post](#).

A few cats don't like scratching on a vertical post, but will scratch willingly on a flat scratching pad. If your cat prefers a flat surface, you can either buy one of the cardboard scratching boxes (typically available from mail order or pet stores), or buy a scrap of plywood and a carpet remnant, large enough to fold

around onto the back of the plywood. Cut the corners on an angle, fold the carpet remnant over the wood, and tack the carpet on using carpet tacks or heavy-duty staples.

Sometimes changing to a scratching post that is covered with sisal rope or a different texture will kindle his interest in the post, as well.

An additional idea, one that worked well when there were more vacant rooms in the house, is to follow the instructions above for a flat-surface scratching pad, then mount it on the wall at a convenient height for the cat, in a hallway or in the laundry room.

Other solutions: If he's scratching wood furniture, rub strong-smelling furniture polish into it. For sofa and chair sides, cover the edges of the sofa with heavy plastic (available at your local fabric store - typically used to cover footstools or protect tablecloths - you can buy twist-pins while you're there to hold the place neatly in place) or aluminum foil for a retro, funky look (use velcro or double-stick tape to hold in place). Or spray a cloth thoroughly with one of the sprays formulated for keeping a cat off the furniture, and pin it to the sofa, chair, or your speakers (don't spray directly onto the furniture). Or, put strips of self-adhesive velcro (loop side out) on the favored scratching spots. If all else fails, everytime you see him actively clawing the furniture, spray him lightly from a bottle of water (do this only when he is actually scratching, **not** when he is approaching or leaving the furniture).

Safety tip: If you have a "cat tree" (typically covered with carpeting for easily climbing up and jumping off of) for your cat, please anchor it securely to the wall or floor so there will be no chance of it falling on your kitty and injuring him

The Gentle Art of Bathing a Cat

written by [Marty Rudolph](#)

The cat should witness no frightening preparations and he is in and out-- so soon being hugged in generous wrappings of dry towels and placed on the floor in a closed room; soon to begin grooming himself. This results in far less mess, less cleanup and a happier cat, I promise you. I hope you will use this with your fine research.

Here are the IMPORTANT KEYS:

- The room is *quiet*. *Running water need not be turned on*
- The water is causing a struggle. *body temp* and the animal isn't startled.
- Use only *diluted soap* for efficient faster bathing and thorough rinsing!!!
- Have *many clean dry towels or blankets unfolded* within reach to wrap around the dripping cat immediately upon rinsing, and to continue drying again and again. Don't skimp here-- use your good towels and lots of them.
- Purchase a *nylon mesh laundry bag* with a drawstring top about 20" x 30" in size, to use to *contain the cat*. He is far safer and not terrified as when he could thrash around. Insert the animal into the bag firmly and carefully, tightening the drawstring above the cat's shoulders only enough to prevent his front legs from getting out. NOTE: become familiar with how to slide the top open and closed, thereby avoiding an undue struggle to remove cat from a wet bag as

1. Secure cat alone in nearby pleasant room.

2. Place a container or waste basket, just large enough to dip the cat into, in one end of the bathtub and fill it deep with tepid water. Stir into the water approximately 1/4 cup of baby-type (no tears) shampoo, mixing well. Fill the remaining bathtub with about 12" of tepid water. Place two 2-gallon big-mouth jugs, or 4 gallon milk type jugs full of tepid water within arms' reach.

3. Stack by bathtub, many unfolded absorbent towels, (use flannel sheets, cotton rug, bathrobe. Have 2-3 washcloths within hands' reach for covering eyes, drying eyes and face washing.

4. When bath is prepared, join cat in the holding room and swiftly and purposely place mesh laundry bag (folded bag back on itself) over bottom half of cat and pull bag up to his shoulders. Carefully tighten drawstring just so feet cannot escape. Your manner and soothing sounds will reassure throughout. Hug cat gently, and proceed to bathroom, closing the room.

5. Holding cat with your two hands on his mid-section, gently lower the bagged cat into soapy water up to neck. Massage smoothly squeezing his entire body to clean rapidly for a minute or so. Lift from soapy water, squeezing water off a bit, and lower into clean water in main body of bathtub. Holding firmly, pull cat gently through water; rinsing cat by massaging all the while. (You may

soon as he is wrapped in drying towels. This entire procedure can be done alone, but an assistant standing by who is not unknown to cat and speaks little, could be a fine help!

- Find big jugs to hold water for rinsing. They must have handles and large openings. Save the ones from bird seed or kitty litter perhaps.
- Don't wash cat's head until he is out of tub, and then use warm washcloths.

release drain in tub now.) Holding cat under front legs with one hand while letting him "stand" in water, begin to pour jugs of clean water over him getting thoroughly clean and rinsed. When all clean water is poured, grab an extra large towel and while holding cat over tub, wrap cat in it fast. Now you are done and can remove cat from bag while wrapping and drying him with one towel after another. Listen! He will be purring before you expect to hear it.

Cat Behavior: Biting & Scratching Not Allowed

A cat that doesn't bite or scratch? You'd be as likely to find a giraffe without a neck! Yes, I agree: but what I am telling you is that you can teach your cat not to bite or scratch when it is petted or fondled. See, it is normal for cats and kittens to bite and scratch when frightened or otherwise emotionally disturbed. Moreover, if you touch your cat in a way that it doesn't like, it will bite or scratch you to make you stop. That is the substitute for the spoken word that your cat uses. Finally, many cats and kittens also scratch and bite when playing or 'pretend hunting'.

However, it is possible to teach your cat not to feel threatened or irritated when you handle it. The trick is to teach it this when it is otherwise relaxed, by first touching it in ways it enjoys – scratching behind the ears and stroking the head, for instance – and very gradually lengthening the strokes. So you could try stroking down his sides and see if he rolls onto his side or completely rolls over, and stroke down his hind legs and tail. You could try using an occasional reward in the form of food, apart from plenty of praise.

The problem with cats is that they don't take kindly to being disciplined. So whatever you try to teach your cat, you must be infinitely patient, because you will almost certainly be met with resistance initially. So once you have found the extremely sensitive spots of your cat, you must not touch them for extended periods in the beginning. Rather, touch them fleetingly and produce a reward to alleviate the irritation. As you will discover, your cat will soon allow you to scratch and touch its sensitive areas without biting.

Cats most often scratch when their paws are being groomed or examined, and yet this is an essential part of their grooming, so you have to touch their paws. A common technique is to gently take hold of your cat's paw, scratch it behind the ear and give it a treat. Repeat this routine – with significant gaps in between and plenty of praise -- several times. That way, your cat will actually look forward to having its paw held rather than reach negatively to it. Once it is comfortable with having its paw held, try to spread its toes and examine the toes and nails.

Since most cats adore being scratched behind the ears, use this as a distraction when you wish to examine your cat's mouth and ears. While you scratch your cat behind the ear, use your thumb to gently unfold an ear to peer inside. Similarly, when you are looking into its mouth, continue scratching behind the ear and gently flip up its upper lip with your thumb to expose the teeth. Remember, gentleness is crucial at all times, as is a reward for good behavior.

Tips for Cat Vaccination

When your kitten is more than nine weeks old, it is time for vaccinations to boost its immunity. Just as your baby gets vaccines to protect her from diseases like polio and tuberculosis, so your cat too needs certain protective measures. In order to know what vaccines do for your kitten, perhaps it would be best if we took a brief look at what actually happens within the feline immune system.

Right after birth

Just after the cat gives birth to her kittens, her milk is sufficient to protect them from most diseases. As in human babies, mother's milk provides the best immunity initially. After a certain period, a kitten develops its own antibodies that act as its protective shield. But in the long run, a kitten will need a helping hand to boost its immunity, and this is where vaccines come in.

Major diseases that your cat needs protection from

- **Feline leukemia:** This is an infectious viral disorder in cats but can easily be kept at bay if your kitten has received early vaccination. Even if your cat mingles with an infected cat, it is well protected.
- **Rabies:** All of us know how dangerous this is. Basically, it is a viral disease that can be fatal and is extremely contagious as well, spreading easily from an infected cat to a healthy one, and thence to humans. Vaccination against rabies is mandatory even for street cats and the federal and state governments take all possible care to make sure strays are vaccinated.
- **Calicivirus:** Another serious viral disease in cats is Calicivirus infection. This is a respiratory disease and highly infectious too. If a cat is once affected, it will become a carrier later and infect other cats as well.
- **Chalmydia:** This is a common cat disorder caused by bacterial infection and is related to the cat's respiratory system. In this disorder, the cat is affected in the nose, lungs and even sometimes the eyes. As we are afflicted by cough and cold, so are cats by chalmydia. And only vaccination can protect your cat from this.

Had cats been human beings, they could have walked down to the hospital on their own and got vaccinated. As it is, it is our duty to protect our beloved pets from these life-threatening diseases and make sure they don't suffer untold agony.

Top Tips for Cat Flea Control

So you found a stray cat and decided to bring it home. The intention is very noble, and you are determined to give the poor homeless creature everything it hasn't had. However, before you do anything else, you need to get rid of the lice and fleas that are riddling its fur.

How do you recognize a flea attack?

Obviously, you will not spot fleas running all over your cat, but you will certainly notice a change in your cat's moods and activities. It will often find corners of beds and sharp edges of tables to rub itself against. Or it will roll on the ground not just in play, but also to eliminate that disturbing itchy sensation. And finally, you will detect spots that were not there earlier on your cat's back. These spots and patches are not new colors but fleas resting on the cat's body.

Fleas are brownish in color and once they enter a cat's fur, they multiply in incredible numbers, laying thousands of eggs. And when these hatch, a cat's life turns into hell on earth. All that the poor animal can do is to bite and scratch itself constantly.

Preventive measures

- To begin with, give your cat a thorough shower and keep it spotlessly clean.
- While you bathe the cat, make sure to apply medicated shampoo specifically containing chemicals that will kill fleas. This is vital if your cat has become the victim of a flea attack but you should use this shampoo as a preventive on a regular basis even if your cat is flea-less. This will keep its fur healthy and prevent fleas from settling in.
- Another important activity is grooming. This includes regular brushing and trimming of your cat's fur.
- Normally, it is better to use soft-bristle combs to brush fur but if fleas have appeared, use a brush with close bristles. This will drag out the fleas and provide immediate relief.

Get a veterinary checkup done

If, after you have tried your level best, your cat is still flea-infested, consult a veterinary doctor. There are injections and stronger medicines than cleansing shampoos that can be used to kill fleas. At all events, do not ignore a flea attack. Make sure you grasp the seriousness of the situation and take strong steps. We would have said nuke the fleas, but that would be totally inappropriate, wouldn't it?

Cat Growth Stages

There is nothing wonderful than having a baby in the family. The step by step development and learning of the new things give the new parents immense joy. You can enjoy the same pleasure and enchantment by looking at a kitten growing up; watching it growing up from a cute and vulnerable creature to gorgeous and graceful young cat will give you the same satisfaction as you would probably get by watching your own child to grow up to become a matured human being.

The Earliest stage in the kittens' life

If you decide to adopt a new born kitten, you should be prepared to welcome at your home a creature that remotely resembles the gorgeous cats that you are familiar with. A new born kitten is pink little thing, weak and vulnerable.

Kittens are born blind and therefore they are completely dependable upon their mothers for first few days of their lives. Don't expect from them anything more than eating, sleeping and growing up at a slow pace and meowing whenever they are hungry.

Second phase

The second phase in the life of the cat begins when its eyes are opened and it gets to see the world and its habitats around it.

As it reaches the age of four weeks, it will start trying to explore what lies in his immediate surroundings. It will be great to watch how the gang of siblings moves around in your home with their feeble steps.

This time around the kittens are expected to pick up initial lessons in socializing. By this time around the kitten is also expected learn the use the litter box.

Just like the human babies are to be introduced to the animal protein at certain stage, the kittens also need to be introduced to these kinds of complex foods. Cats are essentially born with hunter instinct and this time around the wild cat mother would bring their kittens small preys. For domestic cats, this is the time for special kitten food or some dry food softened in water or milk.

The infancy

As the kitten turns six to eight weeks old, they are usually fully weaned and take a step into independent living. If it is a feral kitten it will start to accompany her mother in her strolling around in the locality. The indoor kittens become little more adventurous to make movements all over your home.

The time for fast growth

The next few months will see your kitten grow in tremendous speed. This is the time for vaccinations to prevent your cat being infected with several cat diseases.

This is the time when they learn to distinguish between desired and undesired behaviors. It is expected to respond to its name and a few simple commands. Introduce your cat to the grooming sessions from this time onward.

Adolescence

Just like the human children, puberty brings certain changes in your cat's appearance and behavior. This is the time that calls for patient and tactful handling of your kittens. The adolescence dawns in the cat's life at the age of five to six months and lasts till it reaches his first year.

During adolescence the cat sometime may display an aggressive attitude. However an early neutering will help your cat to achieve a less stressful adolescence.

By six months it attains the appearance of an adult.

Adulthood

The cats will display the normal growth of adult life. This is a phase normally devoid of any significant problems. This is the time when the bond between you and your pet strengthens even more.

Cat Health Problems

Ok, let's not take this too seriously. Your cat's health problems may not necessarily be life threatening. As in our daily lives we often sneeze, cough, have headaches and stomachaches, so our pets suffer too from such things, though perhaps the manifestations are different. You must have noticed that your cat vomits occasionally, but that doesn't mean it has developed a stomach ulcer. Vomiting for you mean dehydration or food poisoning, just as it does for your cat.

Common in cats: Common for humans

Normal stomach trouble: The most awkward part of this situation is that your bedroom and bathroom become one. This is the most common consequence when you suffer from diarrhea or dysentery. When cats are found scooping frequently in the yard or entering the litter box, it definitely has stomach trouble. If your cat is not toilet trained, the floor of your house, including the carpets, will bear unmistakable signs of your cat's activities! Worse, your beloved pet may lie in a corner of the room drained of its appetite and energy, and will vomit and excrete frequently.

When do we fall ill with stomach trouble? Mostly when we consume something inedible or deviate from our daily diet and eat spicy and rich food. The causes are more or less the same for cats. Once a cat starts vomiting, you should ideally let the affliction run its course. If your cat regains its usual condition once it is done vomiting, everything is okay. If not, take it to a vet as soon as you can and get a thorough checkup done for a possible bacterial infection.

Fever and sneezing: Very common and occurs at least once in a couple of months, especially during a change of seasons. As with humans, this is one of the most widespread health problems with cats.

When we have a slight fever, our eyes look tired and we ache all over. Similarly, cats that have fever tend to lose their playfulness and drowsily keep to a corner. Repeated sneezing and a runny nose soon follow. You will also see lackluster eyes and a distinct decrease in the glow of the fur.

If your cat recovers within a couple of days on its own, there is obviously nothing to worry about but if it turns weaker, instead of making wild guesses about the possible disease, see a vet right away. It could be something serious like a respiratory disorder or a viral infection. Obviously, if your cat needs proper treatment, only a vet can show you the way. So instead of hitting panic buttons, think calmly and seek professional help without hesitation.