

Claws & Scratching

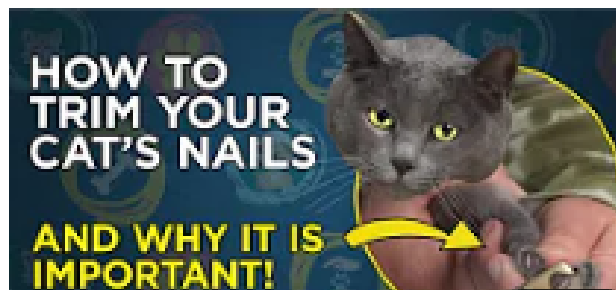
Scratching is a natural and necessary behavior for cats that has two major functions: to shed the worn exterior portion of the nail revealing a sharp, new surface underneath, and to communicate or mark their territory. Scent and sweat glands in between the pads of the paws mix to produce a unique smell which sends a strong message to other cats. Help train your cat to scratch the appropriate areas so you, your furniture, and cat can live in harmony!

- Provide your cat with an alternative piece of furniture to claw – his/her own scratching post.
- Experiment with textures and surfaces. Some cats prefer to scratch on vertical surfaces while others prefer a horizontal surface. *Be sure the post is at least as tall as the cat when stretched at full length.*
- Consider different textures. Some cats may like bark or wood, while others prefer thick rope or carpet for their scratching medium.
- To entice your cat to use the post rather than the couch, place it next to a favorite scratching place, cover it with catnip, and “show” your cat how to use it by extending its claws on the post and making a scratching motion.
- When your cat is using the post, offer praise with lots of yummy treats. This will help reinforce the desired behavior.
- Use a repellent such as perfume or vinegar on the former scratching places, or cover them with plastic or double-sided tape to make them undesirable.
- Trim your cat’s nails regularly, using nail clippers to remove the white tip of each claw. This will prevent damage from occurring when scratching.



How to Trim a Cat’s Claws

Trimming a cat’s claws every few weeks is a vital part of maintaining the animal’s hygiene as well as protecting your couches and armchairs. However, if the idea of trimming a cat’s claws has you biting your nails, know that all it takes is some patience and a bit of practice to sharpen your skills. Click the image below to view a video that shows you the best techniques for trimming your cat’s claws at home.



Click the image to view this how-to video!