

## The Litterbox



Using the litterbox is intuitive to cats and generally there is little you will need to do to “litter-train” your new friend. Here are some tips to help keep kitty using the litterbox!

### **Location**

Choosing an appropriate litterbox location is an extremely important aspect of encouraging your cat to maintain good litterbox habits. Keep the following in mind:

- **Is it accessible?** It’s important for your cat to have access to his/her litterbox at all times. Make sure there aren’t doors or obstacles that might limit access. If your cat is very young or old, it may be difficult for them to go up and down stairs to reach the litterbox. Keep a litterbox on each floor of multiple level homes.
- **Is it in a comfortable place?** The basement is a common (though not necessarily ideal) litterbox location. Appliances such as the furnace, dryer, or hot water heater can surprise or frighten a cat if they suddenly turn on. Unfortunately, this can leave them with a negative and scary association of the litterbox and prevent them from using it. Select a quiet, comfortable place for the litterbox, where the cat won’t be disturbed.
- **Is it the right size?** Cats need enough room to move around! Consider the height of the box for elderly or disabled cats- they need to be able to get over the sides & into the box without difficulty.

### **Litter type**

Some cats are finicky and will refuse to use certain litters (which means your laundry pile or tub might be used instead!). There’s no perfect type- just find what your cat likes! Consider the following:

- **Texture-** many cats seem to have a preference for soft, fine-grained litters.
- **Odor-** some cats are put off by the strong perfume of scented litters. Try unscented litters instead.
- **Volume-** cats need to have enough litter to scratch around in & cover things up! Their nature is to bury it.
- **Once you find a litter that your cat likes, try not to change the brand or type.**



### **Helpful Tips!**

- Covered litterboxes are often preferred by cat owners but not necessarily by cats themselves. Covers work well for cats that urinate high up on their box walls, but may be frightening or too confining for some cats. For this reason, HSCC would recommend first experimenting by offering two boxes, a covered and uncovered, to be sure that your cat will use a covered litterbox.
- For multiple cat homes, HSCC recommends providing one litterbox for each cat in the home, plus one more. You may find that your cat tends to urinate in one and defecate in another. The boxes should be kept in a couple of different locations to prevent any territorial problems from arising.
- Clean the litterbox regularly! Some cats are fussy & will only use a clean litterbox. Scoop daily! Don’t use heavily-scented cleaners: mild soap & hot water will do just fine!