



## Cats and Scratching

**Under no circumstances should declawing be considered an option to prevent a cat from scratching your furniture! Declawing is cruel and can cause serious physical and psychological effects. Scratching is one of your cat's most natural instincts.**

All cat owners and cat lovers should learn about this subject, it will help you understand your cats need to scratch. Understanding your cat's needs may help you more in the long run than you may realize. Cats are generally lovable animals until the time when they ruin your sofa and your carpet, no thanks to their scratching talent. How does one get rid of this irritating hobby called cat scratching?

Well, there is no remedy for your cats scratching mannerisms. In fact, cat experts discourage human from interfering with their scratching because it is already second nature to cats.

Why do cats scratch?

1. The rear paws of a cat were made for scratching.
2. As your cat grows, their claws grow.
3. Cats have to remove the sheath on their claws by scratching, so they can expose their new claws.
4. Cats use scratching as a means of exercise.
5. Scratching is also a means of marking their territory.
6. Just for the fun of it.

Remember that maxim "if you can't lick them, then join them"? This is especially true for cats. If you do not want further damage to your furniture, draperies or carpets, then encourage your cats to scratch - but not on your things. Instead, make your cat happy by providing a suitable scratching post. Buying a scratching post for your cat will give them an outlet for their scratching urge. It will not only save your precious furniture but will also keep your cats happy.

Important, invest in a high quality "pet safe" scratching post. The scratching post should be tall enough to allow your cat to fully stretch its muscles. The base should be sturdy enough to keep it from tipping over and the scratching post surface should be safe for your cat. There should not be any materials and/or fasteners that could come loose and cause harm to your pet especially nails, screws, and/or staples.

Cats can be encouraged to use the scratching post by rubbing 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 their interest; put treats on the very top.

A scratching post is not a guarantee that they will leave your furniture and drapes alone. Some other things that you may try to discourage damage to your furniture is:

1. A quick, painless trimming of their claws (which you can do at home using special clippers). May not stop them from scratching, but will reduce the damage.
2. Covering the claws with soft sheaths (which you can purchase relatively inexpensively).
3. Cover the furniture with something your cat does not like: double sided tape, some plastic or aluminum foil. Some cats dislike the feeling and sound of foil, and most cats hate things that stick to their fur. Double-sided sticky tape used in carpet installation works well, make sure the tape won't harm your cat or furniture.
4. Every time 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).
5. **Be Patient, Be Patient, And Be Patient!**