

HOW RISKY IS IT TO LET CATS OUTDOORS?

Road traffic deaths are at their highest during a cat's **1ST YEAR OF LIFE**

The majority of accidents occur at night, and often just outside or very near a cat's home

Unneutered male cats are at relatively greater risk, presumably because they roam further



ADDITIONAL RISKS & DANGERS OUTDOORS

If a cat survives its first year and learns about the dangers in its environment, it is very likely to live a long life of

15 OR EVEN **20**
YEARS AND BEYOND



POISONING
although this can also occur in the home



FIGHTS
with other animals (predominantly cats)



PARASITES & DISEASE
catching these from other cats or animals



LOST OR STUCK
for example getting shut in sheds or garages

KEEPING CATS WITH OUTDOOR ACCESS SAFE

If a cat is allowed outdoors there are many things owners can do to keep it as safe as possible. These include:

- **Neutering:** Neutered cats stay closer to home, so are less likely to cross roads or get into fights with other cats
- **Microchipping:** This simple form of identification has many advantages over a collar, which can be lost or result in injury should it get caught on a fence
- **Providing preventative healthcare:** Outside cats may have more opportunity for contact with infectious diseases and parasites, so should be regularly vaccinated, wormed and treated for fleas and ticks
- **Confining indoors at night:** Most road accidents and fights occur at night, so training a cat to come inside during the evening is always a good idea (see page 19)
- **Providing a safe, reflective collar:** Reflective collars can improve visibility in low light on roads, but the collar must be of the 'quick release' type in case it gets caught in a fence or hedge
- **Keeping the cat in the garden only:** This can be achieved by using cat-proof fencing designed to prevent a cat climbing out, or by building an enclosure in the garden. If a cat is to be confined to a relatively small area, then it is important to attempt to meet as many of its needs as possible within these limitations. The home and garden can be environmentally enriched to provide opportunities to play, hide, climb and perch, and owners should play with their cat to make sure the cat gets enough exercise and stimulation
- **Keeping the indoor environment secure:** Installing cat flaps which can be programmed only to open for cats wearing particular microchips will prevent unwanted cat visitors in the home and will ensure it feels safe for the cat who lives there

