



**EVERGREEN**  
Veterinary Hospital

## THE PERFECT SCRATCHING POST

Information by dvm360 in association with Elizabeth Colleran, DVM, DABVP, and modified for Evergreen Veterinary Hospital

Your feline friend deserves the best, right? That means their claws do too. Here is all you need to know to create the perfect environment for cat-scratching heaven.

### *A normal behavior*

Scratching is a normal behavior, and you should encourage it by creating places where you and your cat are both satisfied. That is why having the perfect scratching post is so important. Cats need to be able to stretch to full height when they scratch. Look for a scratching post that is taller than your cat's length when stretched out. Commercial scratching posts tend to be made of sisal, but they can be made of wood, carpet or sisal textile material glued to wood.

Some cats like to scratch horizontally, too. Corrugated cardboard and scratch pads may help protect the carpeting. Always attach any scratcher to a heavy piece of wood. Stability is a really important factor – any scratcher that wobbles might be startling and may cause your cat to avoid the object. Make sure that the scratcher has a large and heavy enough base or is secured to the floor or wall, so it offers plenty of resistance to enthusiastic claws.

### *How both will be happy*

The scratching surfaces need to be positioned in the most appealing places to scratch within the home. If the cat has already selected a location to scratch, move the scratching post to that location. Marking here may have some significance to your kitty, and you want to encourage your cat to scratch on the post – instead of your carpet or furniture. Notice your cat's regular routes through the house and place scratching posts there. Some cats like to scratch first thing in the morning, on waking up. A scratching post near the sleeping place will be welcome.

Finally, remember to reward appropriate scratching with treats if you are trying to lure the cat to a particular site. Cats attracted by catnip may find that desirable. Use of treats specifically designated to scratching behavior can encourage them to continue scratching on the surfaces with which you can both be happy.