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Scratching Posts

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Supply your cat with appropriate 'scratchers' so they have surfaces where they can exhibit their normal [scratching](#) behavior.

What Makes a Good Scratching Post or Pad?

Size and Shape

Most cats like to scratch vertically. So, they need a scratching post that is taller than their body length. This allows them to fully stretch and give a good scratch. If your cat is scratching carpet in your house, try using a horizontal scratcher, to see if she prefers that shape.



Texture

The texture of the scratching post is also important. Many cats prefer sisal rope; others prefer corrugated cardboard or carpet on the scratching post.

Experiment with a variety of textures and types of scratchers to figure out which your cat prefers.

Ways to Train Your Cat to Use the Scratching Post

Location is very important. Cats often stretch or scratch when they wake up, so place one near your cat's sleeping area. Important things to keep in mind:

- If your cat is currently scratching items that you would rather she doesn't scratch. Consider placing a scratching post or pad near that item (i.e. in front of a couch leg). If your cat scratches somewhere other than the scratching post or pad; gently pick her up, take her to the scratcher, and then reward her.
- If your cat is scratching on furniture or carpet, do not punish her. Instead, pay attention to your cat's position and the texture of the material when she scratches. This can help you figure out better choices of scratching posts for your cat.
- Place the scratching post next to the furniture your cat is scratching.

Remember that your cat learns best through positive reinforcement. As you are redirecting your cat to use her new scratching post or pad, make sure you give your cat a reward immediately (within 3 seconds) to reinforce the positive behavior. It is important to remember that you need to find a reward that your cat likes. Examples include: treats, catnip, interactive play, and petting or grooming.

More Information

- [Nail Trimming](#)
- [Why Does My Cat Scratch](#)



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