



Indoor cats

A Yorkshire Cat Rescue Guide

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Many people choose to keep cats indoors and not let them have access to outdoors. Whilst it is understandable that we want to keep cats safe from the dangers they face going outside such as busy roads and cat fights, cats that are free to roam are able to indulge in natural cat behaviours and many enjoy their time outside. Some cats however, have to be confined to an indoor life, cats that are blind, deaf or have a disability that would make them vulnerable if they had free access to outside.

Making your house bigger

You may think you know how big your house is but it can become a much smaller territory to cats that can't open doors! Try keeping spare room doors open and increase the number of rooms your cat has to explore and relax in. You can also leave empty cupboard doors open for extra special hidey holes. You may want your house to look tidier when visitors arrive but keep all those access points open when people visit. Cats need to feel free to escape from visitors and meet them in their own time.

Resources (water, food and litter trays)

It is very important where you place these for indoor cats. While cats will usually eat their food anywhere if the water or litter tray is not somewhere appropriate they may not use it. This is less of a problem when a cat can drink from a puddle or use the garden for their toilet but a little thought on placement should mean your cat has no problems.

Cats do not usually like their water bowl being next to their food bowl. It is a good idea for indoor cats to have more than one water source, some cats prefer running water and there are now drinking fountains that provide moving water and may stop your cat drinking from the taps instead.

Cats can feel very vulnerable when going to the toilet so it is essential that the litter tray is placed somewhere where your cat will feel safe. A quiet place where the cat can always access is ideal.



More than one cat living indoors

Often the presence of a companion can give indoor cats more stimulation and increase their wellbeing. However, when cats do not get along the situation is more stressful for the cat in an indoor home as they cannot go outside to take themselves away from the situation. If this is the case consider letting the cats have outdoor access if possible, either free-roaming or in an enclosed garden. If this is not possible or dangerous then you can do a lot of things to make your house bigger inside so there are more places that the cats can go to feel safe. Each cat needs to have a safe place where it can relax. With indoor living cats it is even more essential that cats can access and feel unthreatened when using litter trays and water bowls. Make sure there is more than one water bowl and the general rule is to have as many litter trays as cats plus one. This number can always be reduced if the cats are happily sharing the litter trays.

Playtime!

Cats that live indoors miss out on a lot of exercise and they can also become bored. Finding time to play games with your cats will improve your indoor cat's well-being. Have a variety of toys so your cat doesn't get bored and rotate these. Laser pointers are popular with some cats but make sure that your cat has a toy he can catch at the end of the chase so he does not become frustrated. If your indoor cat is deaf or blind they can still enjoy playing just pick either jingly toys or brightly coloured ones. Food mazes can also entertain your cat and keep their minds active.