

Inappropriate Kitty Urination is Problematic - Not Fun, But Fixable

Mike Fry, No Kill Learning

A fast and thorough response to inappropriate cat urination will almost always resolve the problem.



Let's face it, cat pee is nasty stuff. So when the family cat begins to urinate outside the litter box, it can cause endless problems. While many people dealing with inappropriate urination may become frustrated and blame the kitty, it should be remembered that this sort of behavior is often a sign that the cat is having problems of its own.

Causes of inappropriate urination can fit into two basic categories: medical or behavioral. A host of urinary tract problems, ranging from inflammation of any part of the urinary tract to a variety of infections are examples of medical problems that can cause a cat (male or female) to urinate outside the litter box. Behavioral explanations for inappropriate urination can be even more challenging, because when it comes to their bathroom habits, kitties are complex creatures. Following are a few of the

different behavioral items that can cause a cat to begin urinating inappropriately. This list is, by no means, complete. It does, however, represent some of the more common explanations for this behavior

LAS (Litter Aversion Syndrome)

Litter Aversion Syndrome is really just a fancy way of saying that many cats do not like the litter they are offered. This is especially common with clay litters, leading many people to conclude that something (excessive dust?) is unpleasant to the cat and serves to deter them from using the product.

Multiple Cats Using One Litter Box

Many cats do not like to use a litter box that has already been used by another cat. (Can you blame them?!)

Dirty Litter Box

Some cats will not use a dirty litter box. Others will not defecate in a box they have already used to urinate.

Addition of a New Cat

Because urine is used by cats as a way of marking their territory, the addition of a new cat can trigger urine marking.

Failure to Spay or Neuter a Cat

Fertile kitties are much more likely to mark with urine than are fixed animals. And the urine of unaltered felines is a lot smellier, too.

Declawing a Cat

Removal of a cat's claws removes their primary defense mechanism. This can make them more territorial and result in increased likelihood they will urine mark their territory. Additionally, research into the practice of declawing cats has shown that a very high percentage of cats that have had their claws removed suffer chronic phantom pain that increases stress, alters body chemistry and causes a dramatic increase in a wide-variety of negative behaviors, including litter box "issues."

Added New Furniture

Sometimes something so simple as getting new furniture can lead to urine marking. Leather furniture seems to be especially vulnerable to being marked, possibly because the acids used to tan leather may be similar to uric acid.

Area Previously "Marked"

An area that has previously been marked with cat urine will continue to attract cats to mark there, even after they have been cleaned. It is also worth noting that some household cleaners, like those containing ammonia, can stimulate marking behavior in cats.

With all of these possible causes to potty problems in cats, it is no surprise that diagnosing and solving inappropriate urination can be challenging, especially since medical and behavioral issues can work together to perpetuate the undesirable behavior. For example, a urinary tract infection can cause a cat to dribble urine throughout the living space, resulting in numerous "marked" areas where cats may be inclined to urinate in the future.

With all of these possible causes, diagnosing the real underlying issue leading to inappropriate urination can be a real challenge. However, stopping the behavior is do-able so

long as all of these complexities are taken into account in the final solution. Following is a step-by-step guide to stopping inappropriate urination, regardless of the cause. If followed carefully and completely, this protocol will end inappropriate urination with nearly 100% of cats exhibiting this behavior.

Step 1 - Vet Visit

A visit to the vet is the first step in ending urination problems with your cat. Your vet can help you determine if there is a medical problem that needs to be resolved before going on to the next steps. Unfortunately, not all medical problems are easily detected. Therefore, the fact that your veterinarian does not find a problem does not mean there isn't inflammation in the urinary tract.

Step 2 - Confine the Problem Kitty

Find a single room in the house where the cat can be comfortable but where its movement around the house can be easily restricted. A bathroom works very well. Move the cat's litter box, food and water to this room. The cat should be confined to this area for a period of at least 2 weeks. This firmly establishes this space as the cat's territory and provides sufficient time to break any old "habits." Be sure to spend some quality time with your kitty in this space every day. This is not a punishment.

Step 3 – Switch to Homemade Raw Food

The overwhelming majority of commercial foods are garbage and terrible for cats. Grains and other starches used in pet foods cause inflammation and these things can cause urination problems. Commercial pet foods also make cat urine and feces more voluminous and smelly. Making your cats food from quality raw meat – with no grains or starches – will keep them healthier. (For more information on pet foods, check out my video titled Soylet Pets here: <https://youtu.be/5guS41I-R8A>)

Make the change to the new food gradually.

Step 4 - Locate & Clean All Previously Marked Areas

Turn off your lights in the house at night, then use a black light to look for areas that need to be cleaned. Areas marked with cat urine will glow under the black light. Use Pet Keeper Secrets to clean any areas you find. Pet Keeper Secrets is an odorless, colorless, nontoxic and biodegradable solution that will eliminate the odor and it is safe to use on all kinds of surfaces, including delicate fabrics. If the shelters and rescues in your area do not have Pet Keeper Secrets available, have them contact No Kill Learning to learn about it, and how they can generate revenue from selling it. As an alternative, you can dilute hydrogen peroxide with water and use it. If you do, be sure to test an area of the material that is not visible to ensure it does not discolor it. We recommend avoiding cleaners with enzymes, which can leave

material in carpeting that attracts and grows bacteria, often resulting in a more pungent smell that returns weeks after cleaning.

Step 5 - Change to a Premium, Dust Free Litter

We recommend [Worlds Best Cat Litter](#). The reasons for using this product are many. To put it simply, it is the world's best cat litter! Not only is it dust-free, it is the best clumping litter we have encountered. Because it contains no clay, problems often associated with other scoopable litters are avoided. Worlds Best Cat Litter is made of corn and may be flushed down the toilet, offering unparalleled convenience for cleaning. Just scoop and flush. Cats also seem to love to dig and cover when using this product. For stubborn cats, a product called [Cat Attract](#) works wonders. There is one draw back to using WBC: because it is corn, some cats will try to eat it, and some cats have bad reactions to eating corn. For the overwhelming majority of cats, it works best.

Step 6 – Give Them a LARGE Litter Box & Keep it Clean

The ideal litter box should be 1.5 times the length of your cat. (Side-note: Most commercial litter boxes are way too small). A great Do-it-yourself litter box plan is here: https://youtu.be/n_KBWzHvNn4

Step 7 - Discourage Use of Previously Marked Areas

Spray previously marked areas with [Feliway](#). This new spray product will help retrain your cat to not mark in the house. Continue to spray key areas just prior to allowing the cat supervised visits to the rest of the house.

Step 8 - Supervised Excursions

Following the two-week confinement period, begin letting the cat have supervised excursions to the rest of the house. At nighttime and when not being directly supervised, the cat should still be kept in the confinement area. Gradually begin giving them increased freedom to roam the house. If you observe the cat about to urinate or defecate outside of their litter box. take them directly to their litter box and confine them again. Continue using the Feliway per the instructions on the package for a period of at least 30 days.

Step 9 - Keep the Litter Box In Place

Once the cat has full, unsupervised access to the entire house, keep the new litter box in place. If it is your goal to move the litter box, do so very gradually. It is best to add a new litter box and ensure the cat is comfortable using it before removing or moving the old one. Cat Attract is a good product to use to draw your feline to a new litter box.

Other Litter Box Tips

Make sure you have at least one litter box for each cat in your house. The litter boxes should not be right next to each other. Some cats do not mind sharing. But it is far better to avoid potential future problems by giving each cat their own box.

Clean the litter boxes often! Cats will be more likely to use them, and to be comfortable sharing litter boxes, if they are kept clean at all times.

Keep litter boxes in different areas of the house.

Place litter boxes in quiet, private areas. Most cats prefer privacy when using the litter box.

Avoid the use of covered litter boxes. Covers trap smell and bacteria and may keep your kitty from wanting to use the litter pan. Generally, covers are more for people: they help to conceal a dirty litter box. Covered boxes are, therefore, less frequently cleaned. So just don't use them.

Do not declaw your cat, or you may end up creating litter box issues in the future.