



The Clawing Cat

Some felines see couches, overstuffed chairs, and other furniture as expensive scratching posts designed for their own pleasure. After unsuccessful attempts to keep the cat away from the couch, many owners sentence their cat to a life outdoors, declaw her, or find another home for him (the cat, not the couch).

However, there are easier ways to keep both your cat, and your furniture like-new condition!

Willamette Humane Society (WHS) agrees with The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in discouraging the declawing of cats. As the AVMA position reads:

- *Declawing of domestic cats should be considered only after attempts have been made to prevent the cat from using its claws destructively or when its clawing presents a [health] risk for its owner(s).*
- *Scratching is a normal feline behavior. It is a means for cats to mark their territory both visually and with scent, and is used for claw conditioning (“husk” removal) and stretching activity.*
- *Appropriate claw care (consisting of trimming the nails every 1 to 2 weeks) should be provided to prevent injury or damage to household items.*
- *Surgical declawing is not a medically necessary procedure for the cat in most cases. While rare in occurrence, there are inherent risks and complications with any surgical procedure including, but not limited to, anesthetic complications, hemorrhage, infection and pain.*

(Source: www.avma.org; edited for brevity)

It is important for all indoor cats to have appropriate scratching posts. With the right cat furniture, couches and other human furniture will be much less appealing. There are a variety of scratching posts: carpeted scratching posts; logs with bark intact (most like the natural products outdoor cats would use to claw); corrugated cardboard; and sisal rope.

Place the selected post in an area your kitty enjoys. Treating it with catnip will help ensure your cat is drawn to his new toy. If your cat hasn't taken to his post, try a different type of surface.

Whenever you see your cat going towards a pieces of furniture, gently move him to his own scratching post. If your cat continues to claw where he shouldn't, consider StickyPaws[®], a large piece of double-sided tape that sticks to your furniture and discourages your cat. SoftClaws[®] are plastic nail tips that can be glued to your cat's nails to reduce the damage done by their clawing, while still promoting natural feline behavior.

Strengthening the Bond Between Pets and People

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