Why Keeping Your Cat Indoors is Preferred

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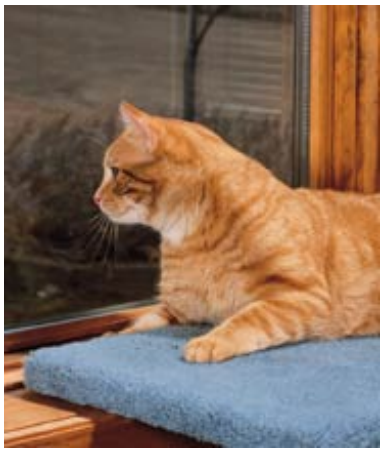
The majority of cats in the United States spend part of their lives outdoors, however an increasing number of cat owners choose to keep their cats indoors all of the time. There are many health advantages to leaving your cat indoors so if your cat has the correct personality, living indoors may be the best option.



Cats, being natural explorers and predators, absolutely love all the exciting sights and sounds of the outdoors. Just observe a cat sitting in a window watching intensely and chattering at an outside bird to witness their fascination. You may want to consider a window perch so your cat can get a "birds-eye" view of the outdoors.

On the other hand, a properly cared-for cat with the right personality is perfectly content to spend her entire life indoors. And, frankly, the outdoors has many potentially dangerous situations. In fact, the average life expectancy for an outdoor cat is about 3 years, compared to twelve for an inside cat.

Outdoor Hazards

Some of the most common dangers for outside cats include:

- Outside cats are more prone to infectious diseases because of encounters with wildlife and other outside pets. Also, outside cats are more likely to consume poisons. If your cat must be outside, make sure she is fully vaccinated and spayed, or neutered.
- An outside cat darting across the street is a perfect target for a moving vehicle and cats that are hit by cars rarely survive.
- If your cat gets into a territorial fight with another cat and gets bitten, she could develop an infection that could send her to the veterinary emergency clinic. In many areas, wild animals are also potential predators. Always check your cat for painful lumps and bumps.
- Not all people love cats. And many cities have laws against stray animals, including cats. Your cat may be picked up by Animal Control and you'll pay a hefty fee to get her back. Make sure you keep identification on your cat at all times.

If you do decide to let your cat go outdoors there are several things that you can do to help protect them.

- Provide your cat with a harness or a collar that includes an identification tag.
- Make sure they are fully vaccinated and are spayed or neutered.
- Attach a bell to their collar to prevent them from killing songbirds or small mammals and to alert people that they are around.
- Don't let cats out without a leash if you have busy roads or dangerous dogs in the neighborhood. Consider teaching your cat to walk on a leash. Many cats can satisfy their desire to be outside with a daily walk.

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