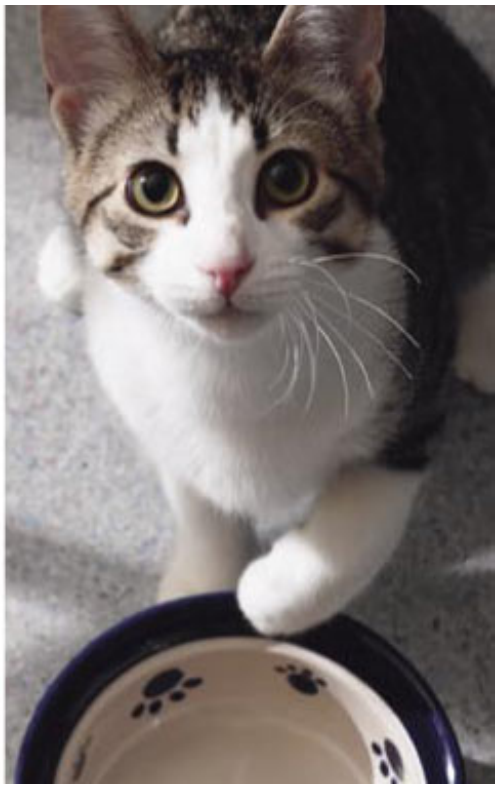
How to Deal with Cats That Beg

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Is your cat an uninvited table guest?



f the table is one place you do not allow your pets, you're not alone. Many pet owners understand the woes of a begging pet at the dinner table. Train your cat that the table is absolutely off limits, and likely she will not bother you and your family at mealtime. Here are a few suggestions:

Make sure she is fed well with a quality diet before you sit down to eat. This means you may need to feed her even before you begin preparing your dinner, so the aroma doesn't make her hold out on eating her own food. With a full stomach, your meal will be less appealing and she's less likely to join you at the table. If she comes to the table anyway, ignore her.

Avoid giving your cat foods from the table - anytime. It's like giving her an invitation to join you. Most human foods are inappropriate for a cat's diet, and you don't want to establish any kind of connection between what you eat and what is acceptable for her to eat. Be consistent. Research has shown that if you reward her even once, the bad habit will become even harder to break.

If your cat is already in the habit of begging, it may help to move her to a different room of the house (with door closed) while you eat. You could hide several small cat treats for her to find, or give her a favorite toy.

Avoid leaving foods on the table after or between meals - even if wrapped. One positive hunting expedition is all it takes to make your cat return to the scene of the crime.

Place a training device directly upon your table between meals, such as an X-Mat, SSScat Spray, or the Tattle Tale. She will learn quickly that your table is off limits.

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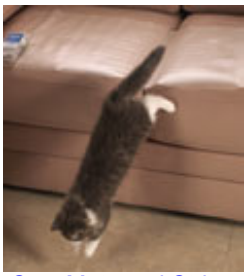
WE RECOMMEND

X-Mats

create passive zones of discomfort your cat will avoid.

Tattle Tale

emits an alarm that deters your cat from off-limits surfaces.



Scat Mats and Strips

Emit a mild, but uncomfortable static charge, letting your pet know the area is "off-limits".

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