Nocturnal Behavior, Causes & How to Curb

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

IS YOUR CAT A night owl?

IT'S HAPPENED TO NEARLY EVERY CAT OWNER. You're sleeping peacefully when all of a sudden your cat wakes you with a pounce to your chest or a bat of your toes beneath the blankets. To be sure, nocturnal feline activity is a rude awakening. But there are ways to help curb this natural behavior.

WHY ARE CATS NOCTURNAL?

Wild cats hunt during the night. For many domestic cats, however, nocturnal tendencies don't end now that food is readily available. Instead, this behavior is simply modified so they sleep during the day when the house is quiet and grow active as your house fills with activity at the end of the work or school day. Research shows that even cats with sleep patterns more attuned to our own still wake at least a couple of times during the night. And we all know that an awake cat is easily enticed to play by the subtlest of movements, such as your rolling over in your sleep.

Change your cat's habits

There are several ways to help reverse your cat's nocturnal habits, including:

- Give him a warm, comfortable cat bed in a location away from your bedroom.
- Use window perches and toys to entice curiosity and wakefulness during the day.
- Play with your cat in the evening before bedtime.
- Don't feed your cat first thing in the morning. Many cats will wake owners up to be fed. Instead, feed your cat in late morning or use an automatic feeder. Finally, feed his largest meal right before bed.
- Ignore your cat's nighttime behaviors. If you show any response, your cat will have gotten what he wants and his antics will continue.

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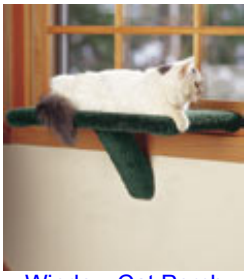
As always, consult your veterinarian if the problem persists or if your cat has suddenly grown uncommonly restless at night, as certain medical conditions may be the culprit.

Cozy Cushion® for Cats



Window Cat Perch

Catit Senses Activity Toys

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