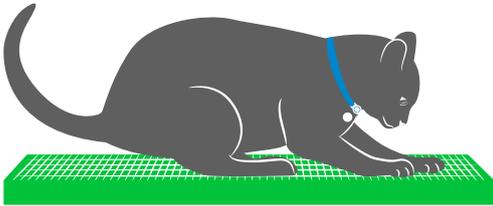


CATS NEED TO SCRATCH

It helps them keep their nails healthy and stretches their muscles.

It also marks their territory, so they can communicate to other cats without needing to go near them. They can also leave messages for themselves to "read" later.



GIVE THEM THINGS TO SCRATCH

Every cat needs access to scratching posts or surfaces they can scratch on.

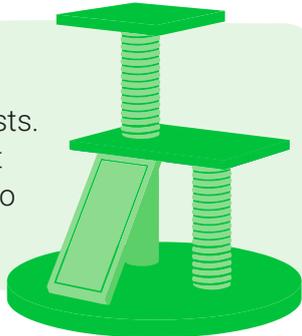
If you do not give your cat scratching posts and pads **and** put these in places that your cat wants to scratch, your cat will scratch something else - like your furniture!



HOW TO CHOOSE GREAT SCRATCHING OPTIONS FOR YOUR CAT

1 Make sure it's strong

Cats don't like wobbly posts. Choose a scratching post with a wide, heavy base so it doesn't move.



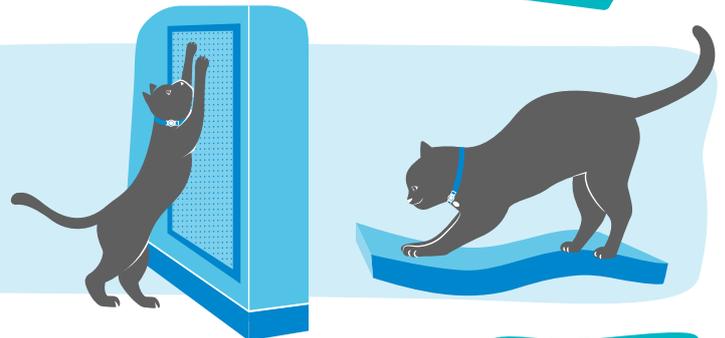
2 Big enough to stretch

Your cat should be able to stretch their whole body when they scratch. Pick something as long as your cat.



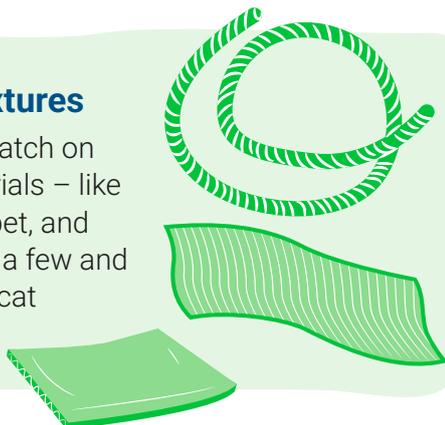
3 Try both up and down

Some cats like to scratch by stretching up (vertical), others like to scratch by stretching out (horizontal). Give them both options so they can choose.



4 Different textures

Cats like to scratch on different materials – like sisal rope, carpet, and cardboard. Try a few and see what your cat likes best.



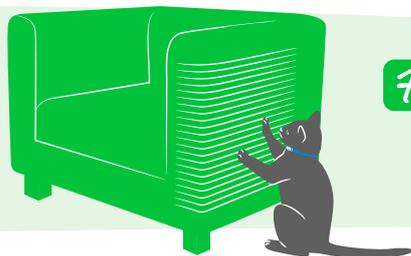
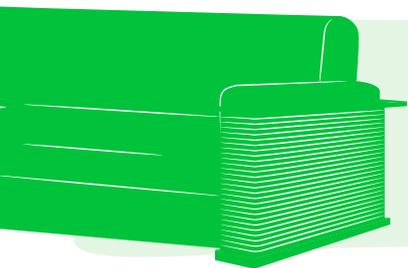
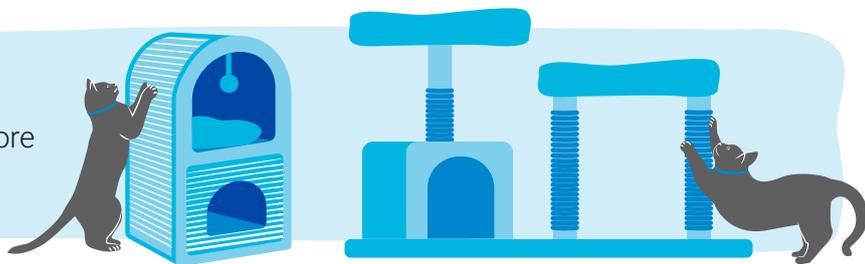
5 Cat trees are a must

Cat trees have scratching posts built in. They also give cats a safe place to hide or rest.



6 Enough for everyone

If you have more than one cat, you need more than one scratching post, pad or cat tree.

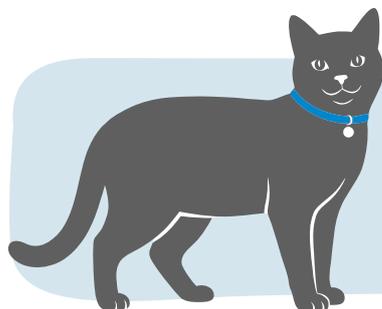
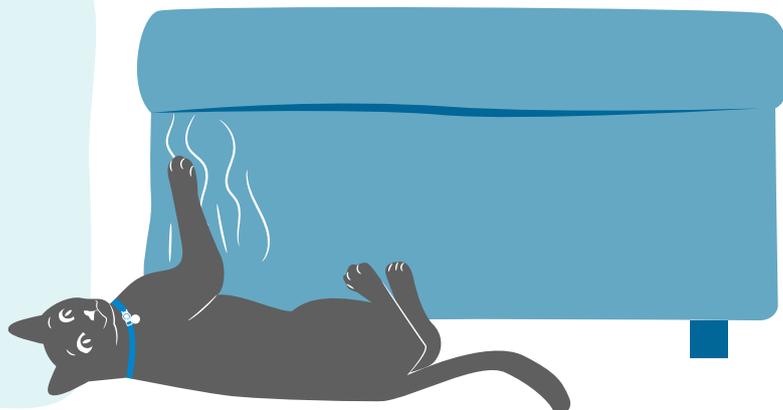


7 Protect your property

Add furniture scratchers to your couches before there is a problem.

8 Location, location, location

- If the scratching post is in a spot your cat likes, they're more likely to use it!
- Put scratching items, near where your cat rests, plays, or spends time with you - like near the couch or bed.
- Cats also enjoy scratching near sunny windows and near doors they use to come in and out of.



PROTECT YOUR HOME AND PLAN AHEAD

Giving your cat the right scratching items **and** putting these in the right spots:



May limit damage to your home.



Makes your cat happier!

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CAT SCRATCHES WHERE YOU DON'T WANT IT TO



- Don't punish your cat. It scares them, hurts your bond, and makes things worse.
- Try to understand why they like that spot. Is it strong, tall, or made of a material they enjoy touching? Put a scratching post nearby that feels the same, so they use that item instead.
- Make furniture less fun to scratch. You can cover it with plastic or other things cats don't like to touch. But if you do this, you must always give your cat something *better* to scratch. Put a post or pad nearby.
- Protect your furniture with scratchers. You can buy couch corner protectors that are made from sisal rope that cats love to scratch.



SUPPORT

For free behaviour advice, email the RSPCA NSW Behaviour Hotline at mail@rspcansw.org.au

RSPCA
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