



TRANSITIONING TO THE SAFE-AT-HOME LIFESTYLE



DID YOU KNOW...



a cat kept safe at home will live on average 10 years longer than a cat that is allowed to roam?

Even if your cat currently roams, you can help them make the change to staying safe at home. Try these simple pointers to give your cat the best chance at success as you make the change to the safe-at-home life to keep them safe from accidents, injuries and diseases.



MAKE A PLAN

Cats are creatures of habit, hence changing their routine will be smoother with some planning and patience.

First, ensure you can meet all your cat's needs at home. This includes food, water, toilets, comfy places to sleep, and opportunities to express all their natural behaviours like hiding, scratching, climbing, chasing and pouncing (on toys and treats).

Ideally, cats should have the choice to access the outdoors safely, which can be achieved by enclosing a backyard, patio or balcony with cat safe netting. This may not be possible for all cat owners, so some cats may need to be housed exclusively indoors, in which some cats will thrive and others may not adapt to this lifestyle. Indoor-only lifestyles should take common stressors into consideration such as young children or other pets. If stressors are not managed, undesirable behaviours may develop so it is important to identify any concerns within the home and seek veterinary or behaviour advice to manage this.



TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Transitioning to staying at home can take some time. Take it slow – the process might take 3-4 weeks or longer. Allowing your cat plenty of time to get used to the new routine can help to minimise frustration and increase your chances of success. It can help to start by keeping your cat inside at night initially then gradually increasing the time they spend inside. It's important to maintain a predictable schedule to make the following transitions easier:

-  **When moving house.** Moving house can be a great opportunity to associate a new environment with a new routine. You will also be keeping your cat safe from dangers in an unfamiliar place.
-  **When it's cold outside.** Winter is an ideal time to get your cat used to staying at home. When it's cold outside, your cat is likely to prefer access to warm locations inside the house or a favoured humans lap. You can encourage your cat to use these locations by placing blankets and cat beds.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

More than 50% of cats in NSW already enjoy a safe-at-home lifestyle. That might include some of your friends, relatives, and neighbours, which means you're never far away from another cat lover who can help you on this journey. Contact your local veterinarian or qualified behaviour consultant for any queries or concerns.

Visit our website for more information, encouragement, inspiration, and to sign up to our community of cat lovers keeping their cats safe at home.

rspcansw.org.au/keeping-cats-safe