

Do cats eat less in summer? Feeding routine advice for warmer months



## **Do cats eat less in summer? Feeding routine advice for warmer months**

Whether you feed your cat on a set meal routine or allow them free-choice feeding (or a combination of both), you may have noticed that cats eat less in summer. This is normal behaviour and nothing to worry about.

Why do cats eat less in summer? Most cats will eat approximately 15% less in the warmer months, even if they are predominantly indoor cats. Cats use less energy maintaining their body temperature in summer and therefore require less food and calories. We will explore your cat's summer eating routine throughout this article so you know how to adapt to their reduced appetite during the warmer months.

### **Why do cats eat less in summer?**

Cats eat less in the summer for a variety of reasons. Cats are generally less active during the summer months so they can conserve the energy they require for temperature regulation (thermoregulation). This helps them avoid overheating and keeps their core temperature stable. These lower activity levels mean they require fewer calories overall and do not need to use as many calories to stay warm, which is why they experience shifts in their appetite.

These changes in appetite also affect indoor cats! Cats may also prefer to eat less in the summer months due to seasonal changes that influence their hormones and metabolism.

Do cats eat more in winter? Yes, you may notice your cat has an increased appetite during

the winter months, cats eat more in winter because they need extra energy to keep warm.



## **Common questions about feeding cats in summer**

In this section, we will answer all your top questions and concerns about your cat's summer feeding routine.

### **Should I change my cat's feeding routine in the summer?**

Some cats remain active all year round so their dietary requirements don't change. Most cats will self regulate and eat accordingly but if you notice that your cat is leaving some of their standard allocation of food, you can adjust the portion sizes that you feed your cat during the summer months. We advise that you feed them around 10-15% less than usual. You probably won't need to change their overall feeding schedule, as cats thrive on routine. Two meals are still sufficient during the summer months, so we suggest that this stays the same, but you reduce the amount of food you put out.

It may be a good idea to incorporate more wet food into your cat's diet. If they eat a mix of wet and dry food during the summer months it will boost your cat's hydration. However, wet food may also spoil faster in the heat, so this is something to keep in mind. As with any change in diet, switching a fully dry diet to include wet food should be managed in small increments. Buying a water fountain is another great way to ensure your cat stays adequately hydrated. Cats love running water, and this entices them to drink more.

### **Is my cat comfortable in summer**

Domestic cats' maternal ancestors have been traced back to the deserts of Africa and the Middle East. As a result, cats are well-equipped to deal with high temperatures, even if they eat less in summer.

## **Why is my cat eating more than usual in summer?**

If you notice that your cat is eating more than usual during the summer months, this may be to increase their water intake if they are eating wet food. However, it could also be due to boredom/lack of mental stimulation, so encouraging interaction or puzzle feeders might be a nice way to keep them occupied. If you suspect your cat's increased appetite is due to something else and you cannot pinpoint the reason why your cat is eating more than usual, or you suspect something is wrong, it is always best to consult your vet.

## **Do cats eat more in winter?**

If your cat is eating more than usual during the colder months, this is usually not a cause for concern! Cats eat more in the winter months to provide them with the extra energy they need to keep themselves warm. Their bodies require more calories during cold weather due to increased energy expenditure, and this contributes to your cat's increased appetite. They may even indulge in comfort eating during the winter months, just like humans do.

## **Will my inside cat eat less too?**

**Indoor cats generally eat less in the summer,** too. If your cat is an inside cat and they have a variety of spots to be in during the day -some cool, some warmer -they will generally find summer easy to deal with, but there may still be a loss of appetite that most owners wouldn't notice...

It is thought that the increased daylight of the summer months naturally causes a reduction in the appetites of all mammals, including our pet cats.

## **What effect does my cat's age have?**

Your cat's age may have an effect on their ability to handle warmer weather. If you have an older cat, you might have noticed they like to be in warm spots during the day, perhaps sunning themselves in front of their favourite window. This may be because the warmer temperature helps alleviate any bone or joint pain they may have. It will also affect their appetite - a more sedentary lifestyle will naturally reduce your cat's energy needs.

Very young kittens generally need warmer temperatures than older cats, as their temperature control needs to learn how to function properly. So you won't see any difference in your kitten's behaviour or appetite in summer.

## **Should I feed my cat wet food in summer?**

As mentioned previously, wet food helps boost hydration levels during the summer, and it may be a good idea to incorporate more into your cat's diet if they eat a mix of wet and dry

food. However, wet food may also spoil faster in the heat and can attract pests, so this is something to keep in mind.

## How can I tell if my cat is getting enough water?

The most common signs of dehydration in cats include dry gums, lethargy, a dry nose, a loss of appetite, changes in skin texture, panting and decreased urination. Cats can become dehydrated during the very hot summer months. Encourage them to drink more and boost their hydration by always topping up fresh water and keeping several bowls throughout the home.

Investing in a water fountain is another great way to ensure your cat stays adequately hydrated during the warm months. Cats love running water, and this encourages them to drink more.

## My outside cat is leaving food in its bowl

As we've mentioned, it's totally normal for your cat to eat less food in the warmer months. If you feed your cat outside, it's important not to leave their uneaten food for too long. Wet and dry food will begin to deteriorate quickly in the summer and can attract bugs, insects and other animals to your cat's bowl. It also quickly becomes unattractive to your cat and can put them off their regular feeding routine. It is better to feed your cat with regular, smaller meals than large servings that they only partially eat.

Has your [cat's appetite changed\(open in new tab\)](#) recently? Our other articles help you explore other possible causes and solutions.

## What else should I look for before feeding my cat

Make sure your cat is relaxed and out of direct sunlight before you feed them. Summer can be a challenge for our feline friends at times, and their reduced appetite can sometimes be the cause for alarm. If you have any concerns about your cat, you should always take them to see your vet. Other signs to be wary of include [digestive issues\(open in new tab\)](#), such as being sick or bouts of diarrhoea.

But, if they are relaxed, eating regularly, getting plenty of fresh water, their body weight is stable, you're brushing them regularly, and they have cool places to be in during the day, there is no reason to be alarmed. Let your cat eat when they need to eat and let them enjoy a nice, long, lazy summer. Sounds lovely!

## Do cats eat less in summer? - FAQs

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## 1. **Do cats usually lose weight in summer?**

Some cats may lose a small amount of weight in the summer, as they tend to eat 10-15% less food on average. Cats use less energy maintaining their body temperature in summer and therefore, require less food and calories; they are also less active. If your cat is losing a significant amount of weight during the summer, you should take them for a vet check-up to check for underlying issues.

## 2. **What season do cats eat less?**

Cats generally eat 10-15% less food during the summer months. Cats are less active during the summer, so they can conserve the energy they require for temperature regulation (thermoregulation). This means they require less food and calories overall and experience a decreased appetite; this also applies to indoor cats.

## 3. **Are cats less hungry when in heat?**

Yes, cats are less hungry during the summer heat as they are usually less active. This means they require fewer calories and may eat 10-15% less food overall. Cats need to conserve their energy for temperature regulation during the warmer summer months. Indoor cats are also less hungry during the summer, but it may not affect them as much.

## 4. **Is it normal for cats to be less active in summer?**

Yes, it is very normal for cats to be less active during the summer. They need to conserve their energy for temperature regulation during the warmer months. This change in activity levels means they may eat 10-15% less food in the summer. These appetite and activity level changes also happen to indoor cats, but may be less obvious.

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