

## LEAVING MY CAT ALONE



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If you share your life with a cat, you could wonder if it is alright to leave your feline friend alone. As you may know, your cat or kitten can cope with spending a few hours on her own. What about leaving her alone all day or for a couple of days? We believe that with proper preparation, your cat can manage and adjust to be in her comfort zone, and feel safe while she is at home alone. Follow our guidelines to find out how.

## LEAVING A KITTEN ALONE TO ENHANCE HERSELF-CONFIDENCE

Prior to her arrival, your kitten has already been used to staying a few hours on her own with her mother. Under four months, she should not be left alone for more than a couple of hours. Young kittens are still fragile and need to be monitored on a regular basis. At this age, your presence is especially beneficial in terms of providing lots of positive, stimulating interactions with you. Time together also grows your bond. If you do go out, make sure her environment is kitten friendly (i.e. remove any potential hazards) and leave out plenty of safe kitten toys, designed especially for your cat when she is alone, and puzzle food dispensers to keep her busy. At the age of four months old you may begin to leave your kitten for slightly longer periods, and check she is still opened and comfortable when you return. Remember, that leaving your kitten alone for short periods of time is a good way to teach her how to manage herself, finding new way to spend her time and occupy herself...She should become a happy, confident and independent cat.

## HOW LONG CAN I LEAVE MY CAT ALONE?

Properly trained, adult cats are able to keep themselves busy and content at home alone for a few hours at a time. They may enjoy peace and quiet times so that they can sleep.

However, each cat has her own personality and habits. If you take the time to observe your cat's behaviour on a daily basis when you are at home with her, you will surely have a much clearer idea of how long she is able to stay alone. If she seems to need to always be in the same room as you, meows repeatedly when you leave the room or engages in unusual behaviour during short absences (for example not using her litter tray), this may be a sign that she feels anxious when you are not around. If your cat behaviour seems out of the ordinary, do not hesitate to talk to your veterinarian. He or she will help you to identify the root of the problem and to find solutions so that your cat recovers her peace and serenity.

On the other hand, perhaps you share your life with a very independent feline, who likes nothing more than exploring her environment, or being outside in the garden for hours. In this case, with the proper preparation, your cat will probably be fine most of the time alone for a couple of days as long as someone regularly comes in feeding, playing and cleaning up the litter tray. In short, some cats need much more attention from their owners and will have a harder time being alone. Paying close attention to your cat's personality and behaviour is still the best way to ensure her wellbeing.

## **LEAVING MY CAT ALONE WHILE AT WORK**

Most of us work out of the house, leaving our beloved pets to spend a significant part of their day on their own. If you are gone from early morning to evening and do not have the opportunity to drop in at lunch, it is important to find a regular neighbour, friend, or cat sitter drop in to play with your cat and check on her. However, this is not necessarily a viable option on a long-term, daily basis. Whatever option you choose, there are a few important things to think about if you are considering leaving your cat alone at home. First off, be sure to provide your cat with enough food and clean water for the day. Double check you have removed from her reach any potentially harmful objects or products. Lastly, do not underestimate the importance of an enriched environment to keep her days fun and prevent boredom. If you have an outdoor cat, she will also benefit from plenty of natural, exciting sources of stimulation. Below are a number of ways to improve her quality of life and liven up her day while you are at work.



# TIPS FOR LEAVING YOUR CAT ALONE AT HOME

Here are some tips to keep your cat entertained while at work:

- Start with making sure that there is enough natural light in her living areas.
- Try to provide several perches around the house, especially overlooking a window, so your cat can enjoy watching what is going on outside.
- Don't skimp on [toys](#), an endless source of fun and stimulation.
- A cat tree is a good way to let your cat safely [enjoying climbing](#).
- A cat water fountain is also a nice option to make water interesting again
- Why not leave the radio or TV on a low volume to keep your cat company?
- Also think about a cat-friendly in-door or outdoor garden with tasty plants that your cat will enjoy munching on such as cat grass or cat mint.
- If you have a real garden, consider creating a cat-safe enclosed area and letting her outside during the day. Make sure she has enough shade, as well as food and water. A programmable cat door will allow her to go out and keep other animals from coming in. For more information about the benefits of letting your cat outside, see our article: [The Pros And Cons Of Letting My Cat Outside](#).
- Finally, consider getting a second cat. Many cats like the company of another feline at condition they have compatible characters and personalities... This will take some time and require an [adaptation phase](#) of a few weeks before letting them alone all working day but it can be a good solution for long term working rhythm...

## SHOULD I LEAVE MY CAT ALONE OVERNIGHT?

If your cat is comfortable staying alone on a regular and daily basis, she is likely to be able to handle you leaving her alone overnight or for a day. In this case, keep in mind the following additional tips:

- Ensure that your cat has ample food and water. While you may have an automatic food dispenser and fountain, we recommend also leaving out clean water and food in bowls around the house as a backup plan.
- Make sure that the indoor temperature is comfortable for your cat. If you live in a region prone to extreme heat or cold, you might look into a programmable cooling or heating system in case of an unexpected heat wave or cold front.
- Longer periods of time should always include a cat sitter, neighbour or someone else to spend some time with your cat and to clean the litter tray (even if there are more than two).
- Leave two cat litters around the house, to allow your cat to keep herself clean and comfortable.
- Finally, the longer your cat is at home alone, the more important it is to provide her with enrichment. Make sure to try some of the tips in the list above for creating a stimulating, comfortable environment for your cat.

## TIPS FOR LEAVING CATS WHILE ON VACATION

No matter how independent your cat is, we do not recommend leaving your cat alone without daily visits from a friend or a professional cat-sitter for more than two or three days. Today, there are many options to care [for your cat while you are away](#). Keep in mind that, cats tend to be independent, territorial animals. They are generally attached to their home environment and usually take much longer than a dog to get used to new

surroundings. Consequently, the best option is to have a pet-sitter come in and visit your cat rather than traditional pet boarding. Some pet sitters will even stay in your house if you prefer that option. Whatever you decide, always take into account your cat's personality, age, health lifestyle and habits.

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