



Keep cats indoors

Cats don't have nine lives—just the one. Here are nine reasons they're healthier in your home.

1. Not everyone likes cats

We know you love your special kitty, but not everyone likes cats. Irritated neighbors or community interlopers could pose a threat to your special fluff if you allow him or her to roam the neighborhood.

2. Some people like cats too much

When people come into your neighborhood to visit friends, they might just see your beautiful cat as a great souvenir and take him or her home with them. While microchips can prove ownership, you first have to know who took your cat—and that can be tough to find out. Better to keep your valued family member inside and safe.

3. Rabies is still a problem

Rabies occurs in all areas of the United States, and cats are the most common domestic animal testing positive for rabies—yikes! We know you vaccinate your cat, but why

tempt fate? Cats roaming outdoors are frequently found hanging out with stray or feral cats, raccoons and other creatures that are capable of transmitting rabies to your cat.

4. Parasites are the pits

Roundworms, hookworms, fleas, ticks and other parasites are unwelcome houseguests. But if you let your cat roam free outdoors, these parasites could be moving in when your cat returns.

Heads-up: It's true that your cat may still be exposed to parasites even if you keep him or her exclusively indoors, so routine parasite treatments from your veterinarian can cut down the numbers and keep you, your family and your cat safe and healthy.

5. Felines fight

Free-roaming cats show up at veterinary hospitals with various wounds from fighting with other cats that are “on the street.” Cat-

bite abscesses are no fun for cats or their owners. So, while we know that your kitty is adored by all, other cats certainly might jump them in the alley. Best to keep your special snowflake safe and sound at home.

6. Car accidents happen

Cats are difficult to see, so unless your cat knows to cross inside the crosswalk and with the light, traffic is not your friend. I hope your kitty never has to learn how to cross the street the hard way. Keep them safe from vehicular damage and keep them inside.

7. Birds are not fans

That bird feeder in your backyard is like putting fish in a barrel for a free-roaming cat. Cats are great hunters and will hunt even if well-fed. Free-roaming cats devastate bird, lizard and other reptile and amphibian populations. Give your local ecosystem a break and keep your great huntress inside.

8. FIV and FeLV are serious

Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) and feline leukemia virus (FeLV) have lifelong implications for your cat and are spread through contact with unknown cats that transmit the disease. Unfortunately, cats that are vaccinated for FeLV can still contract the disease. Do your cat a favor and keep them safe from these chronic illnesses by keeping them inside.

9. Wild animals threaten

Foxes, coyotes, alligators, mountain lions, dogs and other wild animals can make a quick meal of your Muffin. Even if your cat makes it home from such an encounter, the recovery from the trauma and injuries can be significant and certainly no fun for you or your cat. Spare your special kitty the pain and suffering from such an assault and keep him or her indoors.