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## How To Stop Your Cat Scratching And Ruining Your Furniture

By Niall Kennedy

It's natural for cats to scratch but often it destroys your good furniture. Thankfully there are some things that you can do to relieve the problem.

Many people watch in sadness as their cat destroys virtually everything that he can get his claws into. You can improve this behavior. To do so, you need to know why he is doing what he is doing.

### Why Scratching?

Cats were hunters. They needed those sharp teeth to help them to climb trees and to leap down on their prey. Although your cat is not likely to be pouncing on their dinner anymore, they still instinctively need to sharpen their claws and that is exactly what they are doing on your furniture. The scratching that they do is a way of trimming their nails and it removes the old outer part of the claws. Another reason they are ruining your home is because they know it to be their territory. They release a scent from special glands in their paws which helps them mark the area as theirs. They also do it because they are working the kinks out of their body as well as burning some energy.

Before you head off to have him de clawed, you may want to try out some of the alternative methods of preventing the scratching.

### Alternatives

One way is to provide them with scratching pads or posts. There are a wide variety of them available including those that are part of a cat condo. You can even make your own by using two foot high section of a four by four, two foot by two foot piece of heavy plywood and a carpet remnant. When you have one of these, take it and put it right next to his favorite piece of furniture to destroy. Then, gradually move it away from the furniture as he gets accustomed to it.

You can also use a pet repellent spray such as Bitter Apple on the furniture that the pet is clawing at. Take the time to test the spray on a non visible area of the furniture before using it though. Or if you do not want to spray the furniture, then cover the material with aluminum foil or tape that is placed sticky

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side up. The cat will not like the material and will turn to the scratching post instead.

### The Last Resort

Some cats just can't seem to stop. For these, de-clawing becomes the best option. If your cat stays indoors, you can have their claws removed. There are some risks involved and the procedure can be painful for him. Those who would like to avoid this like to use nail caps instead. These are applied as false nails would be to the cat's nail.

If your cat is a scratcher, do what you can to stop him before you have him de-clawed. If this becomes the best option though, it may be better than having your furniture torn up!

I hope that some of these simple tips help you save your furniture from cat attack without stopping you cat from enjoying life.

Niall Kennedy is a lifelong pet lover and has worked in several pet sanctuaries.

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## **How To Stop Your Cat Scratching Your Furniture – Forever!**

### **By Larry Chamberlain**

Your cat scratching at your furniture can not only leave you out of pocket but also very frustrated and annoyed at your cat for being such a bad little kitty. Cats need to scratch, it is something that cats instinctively do, not as you may think, in order to sharpen their claws, but to remove the old layers of their nails.

Do not punish your cat for scratching, or for anything you see as bad cat behavior. Punishment is unlikely to have any beneficial effect whatsoever. Your cat simply will not understand if you try to punish her in any way for something she has done, cats do not relate punishment to the "crime", they are far more likely to relate the punishment to you!

Even cats that are allowed outdoors will sometimes scratch your furniture, although not as often as indoor only cats. Trees are the natural scratching surface for cats, and to a cat that is kept inside the arms and legs of chairs, and other furniture, sure seems like a suitable alternative!

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The most common answer to this cat scratching problem is, of course, a scratching post, or even two. A great variety of posts are available from pet stores and online pet suppliers. They are fairly simple things to construct, but if you do make one yourself, be certain that there are no nails or other sharp things left sticking out to snag your kitty. And make sure that the base is heavy enough, if it falls over your cat will not want to use it again. Cover the post with rope rather than with carpet, the last thing that you want to do is give your cat the message that it is OK for her to scratch carpet!

Ensure that the scratching post is tall enough for your cat, cats like to stretch when they scratch it exercises their muscles. Spread cat nip on one of the platforms to make the post even more attractive to your cat, and attach a few toys to the post so that they hang down temptingly.

If you just put a scratching post down in front of your cat, what is she going to make of it? It may look like a good place to scratch and claw, but then she has been mildly admonished for scratching at things. You may have to teach your cat that it is OK to use the post, that it will not upset you, that scratching the post is what you want her to do.

Every time that you see your kitty about to scratch your furniture, pick her up and gently place her in front of the post. If she decides to use it give her plenty of praise and encouragement. Cover the furniture she scratches with some netting, or aluminum foil. Your cat should soon learn that it is unpleasant to scratch furniture, but great to scratch her post.

If your cat is in the habit of scratching wooden furniture, or doorjambes then strong smelling polish, or vinegar are often good deterrents, if you try the vinegar, check that it won't harm the surface of the wood. Some cat owners report that half an orange or lemon placed by the problem has good results. Do not remove the disagreeable smells or covering from your furniture until your cat has been using her scratching post for about a month.

If your cat is a horizontal scratcher rather than vertical one, in other words she scratches up your carpet or expensive parquet flooring, try persuading her to use a piece of rush matting, tape the matting down to prevent the mat moving.

Whatever you do to solve your cat scratching problem, do not even think of declawing, it is barbaric.

Larry Chamberlain is a lifelong lover of cats and lives in London England. He is the webmaster and owner of

<http://www.best-cat-art.com>

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