

STEPS TO RESOLVING FELINE HOUSE SOILING

1. Get a health check-House soiling may begin as a health issue. For example, a urinary tract infection or GI upset can lead to pain associated with being in the litter box. Kidney disease and diabetes will cause more frequent urination and a constantly full box. If your cat is diagnosed with a medical condition affecting litter box use, you may need to change the type or number of boxes in the home.
2. Healthy cats urinate and/or defecate outside the box for several reasons. Both males and females, intact and fixed, will spray or squat to urinate.
3. Sexual Marking-Intact males AND females will spray. Spay and neuter your cats to eliminate this problem.
4. Squatting to urinate and/or defecating near the box-Change the litter box configuration. Some suggestions:
 - a. Use opaque, plastic storage boxes (~30x12x16 in.) with 40-60lbs. of non-scented, sandy, clumping litter.
 - b. Change the litter when it smells to you! It will reek to your cat.
 - c. Increase the number of boxes. The rule is one box for each cat plus one. Some cats do not like to urinate and defecate in the same box.
 - d. Place the boxes in separate, easily accessible areas; not lined up side by side in the garage or basement or next to a noisy washer/dryer.
 - e. Use low traffic areas for box placement where the cat is not likely to be ambushed or surprised while using the box.
 - f. SCOOP THE BOXES AT LEAST ONCE DAILY. TWICE DAILY IS BETTER.
 - g. Some cats develop a site preference for eliminating. You may need to place a litter box, at least temporarily in a chosen spot. Make other boxes more desirable and at the same time, gradually move the temporary box closer to an acceptable place.
 - h. Some cats develop a material preference. Some people place pieces of washable area rugs or sheets in boxes for their cats whom prefer these materials. It's easier than cleaning urine or feces from your bed or living room rugs.
5. Reactionary Marking-Includes spraying, defecating and squatting to urinate away from the box. Eliminating away from the box can also be a litter box issue.
 - a. Make the boxes as attractive as possible (see #4 above).
 - b. Clean the areas well with enzymatic cleaners and rinse well. Do not use ammonia or bleach, or detergents.
 - c. Make the areas adverse to use with aluminum foil, potpourri, upside down plastic carpet runners, mothballs, or citrus spray.
 - d. Place a food bowl in the spot, at least temporarily. Cats do not eliminate where they eat.
 - e. Make an "L" shaped box for spraying and move to a more appropriate area when the cat is using it.
 - f. Use Feliway spray and/or defusers. Follow product directions. This product is an artificial facial pheromone and makes the cat think the areas

are already marked. It makes the areas feel familiar and calming. Feliway doesn't work for fecal marking.

- g. If the reactionary marking is from indoor cats seeing strange cats outside, block the view by closing doors, blinds, or using opaque adhesive window coverings on the lower half of a slider, French doors, or low windows.
- h. Medication is a last resort. It is to be used with behavior modification. All medical conditions must be ruled out. The medication may have to be given on a permanent basis and must be prescribed by a veterinarian.

Punishment is not part of the treatment for house soiling. It is counter productive. The cat will only learn to avoid the owner and may even become more anxious which could increase the problem. It is also important to remember that long standing inappropriate elimination may never be fully resolved, but may be reduced to a satisfactory and manageable level.