

The Art of the Litter Box

By Lori Jo Oswald

If your cat is “missing” his litter box, there might be a medical problem. Have your veterinarian check him for urinary tract disorders and other ailments.

But often, the litter box problem is a simple one to fix.

How Often Should I Change the Box?

The first thing to remember is that cats are very clean, and they like clean places. Some won't use a dirty litter box.

- Simply change the litter box at least once a week—don't simply “scoop” (although fussy cats will want you to scoop out any waste daily).
- Rinse out the box.
- Replace newspapers or the liner underneath the litter.
- But most importantly, use fresh clean new litter. Often.

If you have a large house or more than one cat, you may need to provide two litter boxes.

What If My Kitten Doesn't Know How?

Most kittens know how to use a litterbox long before they come to live with you. However, if you have a kitten that was taken away from her mother too early, she might not have learned how to use a litter box, so you'll have to teach her, though this is very rare.

- Put her in the box about 15 minutes after she eats.

- Praise and reward her after she's done.
- You can also gently show her how to cover the waste with her front paws.

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Where Should I Put the Litterbox?

Make sure the box is easy to reach, yet private. If you have a large house or more than one cat, you may need to provide two litter boxes.

You might need to try moving the location of your current box and covering a favorite off-limits spot with foil or plastic wrap, according to Purina, or consider changing the litter brand to one your cat seems to prefer.



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