

Self-isolating or working from home?

Here are some things to consider to keep your cat healthy and happy:

- Providing a safe place.
- Multiple and separate resources.
- Playtime and predatory behaviour.
- Respect for a cat's sense of smell.
- Positive, consistent and predictable human-cat social interaction.

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PROVIDING A SAFE PLACE

It is important to provide private places where your cat goes to sleep, rest or feel secure:

- Top of the cupboard
- Underneath the bed
- A raised shelf
- Inside the wardrobe
- Inside a box

(ensure plenty of variety and choice!)

CHILDREN CAN GET INVOLVED TOO:

- Turn a cardboard box into a hidey-hole by making a little entrance.
- Set up your child's play tent up for the cat.
- Create a nest by putting a cloth over a breakfast stool.
- Place a comfy blanket under the bed.

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MULTIPLE AND SEPARATE KEY RESOURCES

Key resources are essential things that cats need to be happy and healthy in the home:

- Food
- Water
- Toileting areas
- Scratching areas
- Play areas
- Resting/sleeping areas

Cats should never be disturbed while making use of these key resources – except playtime of course.

CHILDREN CAN GET INVOLVED TOO - GATHER SOME KEY TOOLS:

- Toilet roll tubes
- Cereal boxes
- Egg boxes
- Yoghurt pots

Please do not use paint or small parts that can be hazardous.

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PLAYTIME AND PREDATORY BEHAVIOUR

Food foraging

Problem-solving devices like puzzle feeders allow cats to use their senses to forage for food – great for keeping them entertained!

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INTERACTIVE & OBJECT PLAY

Interactive play and object play are short and intense predatory games.

CHILDREN CAN GET INVOLVED TOO:

- Make your own fishing rod or furry catnip toy – give an old or unused object new life!

Please remember:

- Play sessions should be carried out at set times (cats love routine).
Ideally early in the morning or in the evenings.
- Rotation! Only provide a small selection of toys per day - to maintain the novelty.
- Supervise children whilst playing with cats and toys.

EXPLORING

Cats are naturally curious. Make sure there are plenty of novel things for them to explore!

CHILDREN CAN GET INVOLVED TOO:

- Build a cardboard castle!
- If you have more than one cat, make sure there is more than one entry and exit point.

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RESPECT A CAT'S SENSE OF SMELL

Avoid strong-smelling products and provide places for appropriate scent-marking – aka feline communication.

- Avoid strong-smelling cleaning products, scented candles or room sprays.
- Consider removing outdoor footwear – avoiding challenging new smells.
- Provide scratching and facial rubbing areas.

CHILDREN CAN GET INVOLVED TOO:

- Make a facial rubber using wooden nail brushes or scratching pole.
- If you have outside space consider planting a cat-friendly garden (view 'cat advice' at www.battersea.org.uk)

Use of synthetic pheromones might help some cats coping with this major change in routine.

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POSITIVE, CONSISTENT AND PREDICABLE HUMAN-CAT SOCIAL INTERACTION

Recognise signs of receptivity such as purring, facial rubbing, chirruping, head bunting, vertical tail and relaxed roll.

Remember cats like:

- To be in control.
- Gentle touch and voice.
- Low intensity and high frequency contact.

Tips for adults working from home:

- Find a workstation in a room where your cat spends little time.
- Or, if your cat enjoys being with you, set up a cosy bed on a table or desk.
- Adopt your normal working hours if possible.
- Ignore your cat's demands and attention-seeking behaviour during those hours.
- Do not use food or treats to bribe your cat to stop pestering you – this will have the opposite effect

CHILDREN CAN GET INVOLVED TOO:

- **For younger children** - draw a cat and mark the areas they like and dislike being touched.
- **For older children** - consider looking at *'The Trainable Cat: A Practice Guide to Making Life Happier for You and Your Cat'* by John Bradshaw and Sarah Ellis.

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