

FELINE FORUM: KEEPING YOUR CAT SAFE INDOORS



Keeping kitty indoors may help keep her safe from fights, disease, predators, cars, and the other hazards of wandering the neighborhood. But inside there are dangers to watch out for, too: Dangling drapery and blind cords often attract cats, who love to play with them. Unfortunately, that can also get tangled in them and severely hurt, even strangled. Tie the cords up with a rubber band or wrap them around the cord holder-to keep this temptation where kitty can't reach.

If your cat spends her time wandering your counters, make sure your gas or electric stove top is out of reach. An open flame or hot grate can cause severe burns. One option is burner covers. Another is placing foil on your counters to discourage your cat from jumping there in the first place.

Cats like small, warm places to sleep and your clothes dryer may be especially tempting. Always check your dryer before turning it on. If you see your kitty, go in the dryer, close the door and knock on the top for a few seconds before letting her out. That may be one way to teach her not to go in there.

Another place where cats like to sleep is under furniture, and recliner and rocking chairs pose a special hazard. Cats caught in the recliner mechanism, or under a chair runner, can be seriously injured or killed.

Also remember to keep electric cords and toxic plants out of kitty's way

KNEADING IN CATS

When your cat gets comfortable on a chair or your lap, it may display behavior called kneading. Which means it may not need much at all.

Kneading occurs when a cat rhythmically presses its paws against you or another soft surface as if it were kneading bread. This motion probably reminds an older cat of the time when it was nursing and movement against the side of its mother stimulated milk flow. Don't be concerned that your kitty's not happy if she starts kneading you. It's perfectly normal—a sign that she's completely relaxed with the company she's keeping.



COLORFUL CATS:

Wondering whether your beautiful new kitty is a tortoiseshell, Calico, torbie or tricolor? Her coloring and patterning let you know for sure.

When you see a cat with two colors blended and no distinct patterning, you're looking at a tortoiseshell. Tortoiseshell coats are often made up of patches of red and black: if dilute, then cream and blue. A cat with two colors and a distinctive pattern all over is called a torbie (short for tortoiseshell tabby). The torbie pattern is also called a patch tabby. Torbies are essentially a combination of tortoiseshell and the tabby pattern.

A calico is mostly white with two other colors (red, black, blue, chocolate, lilac, or cinnamon) broken up into distinct patches. The white part of the coat is usually more prominent on the underside of the body, and the colored patches tend to be larger and more distinct than in the tortoiseshell or torbie pattern.

A tricolor cat, as the name implies, is simply a cat with three colors. Calico cats are good examples. Common tricolor combinations include red, black, and white; red, chocolate, and white, cream, blue and white, and cream, lilac and white.