



Enrichment: help your cat live their best life at home



There are lots of fun ways to create a happy home for your cat. Some people worry that their cat will get grumpy if they're not allowed to roam, but you can keep your feline frisky by giving them plenty of stimulating activities – known as **'enrichment'** because they enrich your cat's life.

Sensory enrichment

By providing enrichment, you're giving your cat the chance to live their best life. They will be able to express all their natural behaviours like following scents, stalking, chasing and pouncing, while staying safe at home.

Make your home an exciting place for your cat by giving them lots of different things to see, smell, hear, taste and touch. Give them vantage points so they can watch what is going on. Doors and windows with cat-proof fly-screens can be left open, so even cats kept exclusively indoors can enjoy outdoor scents and sounds without escaping.

Cats love interacting with things that feel and sound interesting, like scratching pads covered with different types of carpet and toys with bells. You could even plant some catmint and catnip to surround your cat with happy smells.



Social enrichment

Just like people, some cats are more social than others. Your cat may be a social butterfly and enjoy interacting with you and other companion animals at home, or they may prefer to more time to themselves. Most cats prefer frequent interactions that are short and gentle. Cats are very sensitive to touch, much more so than we are, so what you might consider a light touch can feel very intense to your cat.

Get to know your cat and get familiar with [cat body language](#) so you can better understand what they are telling you. Maybe they prefer daily playtime or short training sessions. Grooming sessions can be a wonderful way to bond with your cat, noting that cats are generally more comfortable being touched in some areas of their body than others.



Most importantly, follow your cats lead, let them initiate, choose and control the duration of interactions. Asking your cat's consent before each and every interaction will let them know they can trust you.

The Consent Test



Step 1:
Wait until your cat comes to you.



Step 2:
Offer your hand and WAIT.



If your cat approaches, smells, or nudges you, try some pats or scratches for a couple of seconds. Return to Step 2 and repeat.



If they stay still or move away, STOP. Give them some space. Try again another time.

Feeding enrichment

Whoever said "don't play with your food" was dead wrong. Eating and drinking are fun! Instead of putting food in boring bowls, pop kibble in puzzle feeders or [homemade food puzzles](#) your cat has to manipulate to get the food. Create a treasure hunt by hiding your cat's favourite foods in different locations, or scatter dry food for your cat to chase.

Some cats love drinking from water fountains made for pets, others love a dripping tap, or a mug. Offer your cat choices and see which they prefer.



Play

Cats are naturally curious, so keep things interesting. Mix it up between 'hunting' games (where your cat gets to stalk, chase, pounce and catch treats or toys), puzzles (with food or toys inside - not the 1000-piece ones), and things they can play with on their own (e.g., empty cardboard boxes, scrunched up paper). [Interactive play](#) with you is most rewarding for your cat and is a great way to bond. No one likes doing the same thing day in and day out. Rotate between different toys and pretty soon, your cat's at-home lifestyle will be all fun and games!