

## Is Natural Litter Right for You?

**Read about the different varieties and see what's best for your cat.**

*By Elisa Jordan*

If you own a cat, one of the first decisions you must make is choosing which cat litter you're going to purchase. The kind of litter we settle on is really a family decision: The cat needs to like the litter and feel comfortable using it, of course, but the people doing the scooping, cleaning and living with litterboxes need to be able to tolerate it, too.

Litter companies are producing innovative products in addition to the traditional ones that, for decades, have done the job for us.

Everyone is talking about the environment, and there's a natural curiosity about it amid the current media coverage. In fact, over the last 10 years or so, this market segment has exploded and continues to expand, indicating that it's a niche consumers are increasingly exploring. Regardless of what it's made from, all litters should absorb moisture and control odor. There are numerous types of great litters out there, but for this article we'll look at the natural variety.

**Corn:** The structure of corn absorbs ammonia and binds it up, which traps odor. Because it's made from a food source, it's OK if the cat swallows some of it. Corn litter clumps, and some brands also are flushable (although some regions still do not allow this, so check the ordinances in your area to be safe).

**Wheat:** Made from naturally processed non-food-grade wheat, the enzymes help eliminate odors, and the wheat starches clump when absorbing moisture. This litter also is edible.

**Soy:** Made of soybean meal and granulated potato starch, this litter clumps and controls odors. It is flushable, but again, check your city's rules.

**Pine:** Made from dried, scrapped pine lumber, pine litter naturally neutralizes litterbox odor because of its intense scent. Some types are clumping litters, others aren't. So it's really your own preference.

**Wood or Bark:** Numerous types of litters are made with wood or bark, and the raw materials come from various sources, often as recycling materials from lumber or floor companies. They all absorb moisture and fight odor. Å

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