

How Can I Keep My Cat Safe With Workers in the House?

CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, discusses ways to minimize the disruption to your kitty.

By Jeanne Adlon

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Q: I am planning to have work done in my home while I am away. What should I do about my cat?

A: I'm glad you asked that question. I remember poor Ethel, a cute black-and-white kitty who was friendlier than most cats – until workmen invaded her home. Though I agreed to cat sit for Ethel, her owners neglected to tell me that construction was going to be done in their apartment while they were away. Had I known, I would have suggested they take her to another place.

Imagine my surprise when I arrived the first day to find chaos in the house. All the furniture was piled in the middle of the rooms with heavy tarps thrown over them. Workmen were trudging in and out of an open door to the hallway. I immediately asked, "Where's the cat?" and to my shock they answered, "What cat?" I tried calling her name but there was so much noise I decided to come back later. I asked the workmen to watch out for her and to please keep the door closed.

When I came back later, I called her name repeatedly until, thankfully, I finally heard a faint meow under one of the tarps. The poor kitty had been so terrified, she had wedged herself underneath the furniture. But, thank goodness, she was still in the apartment. I lifted the heavy tarp so she could free herself and tried to calm her down. I then set her up in the only room not being renovated – a large bathroom with a window. I put her bedding, food, litter and water inside, and hung a sign on the closed bathroom door that said: Do Not Enter – Cat Inside. Fortunately, Ethel was happy to stay put.

If you are considering getting work done while away, find a safe location for your kitty. Cats like to be at home with their familiar surroundings but not if it's a nightmare of noise, dust and disruption. If they stay at home, make sure there is one room they can be placed in behind a closed door with all their essentials, and will only be visited by whoever is caring for her.