

My Cat's Sneaking Food From the Table

CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, offers some tips for keeping kitty honest.

By Jeanne Adlon

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Q: How can I stop my cat from sneaking food from the table?

A: Food is the No. 1 thing cats like to steal; sometimes right in front of us! This reminds me of a near-disaster one Thanksgiving years ago. I was making a large dinner and left the kitchen briefly (and an uncooked turkey in the sink) to check on things in another room. When I returned I was shocked to see my 10-pound cat Farfel up on the kitchen sink trying to drag my 20-pound turkey out of it! I quickly put a stop to that and luckily no damage was done to the turkey or Farfel - though I couldn't help think that there is never a camera around when you need one. There is no way he could have gotten that turkey out of the sink, but he sure could have taken a bite out of Thanksgiving.

Some cats are very aggressive about stealing "people" food. Rule No. 1 is do not allow your kitty on any table or surface where you will be serving food. That will only encourage him to be there while you are eating. He could consider it perfectly fine to help himself to your dinner. Also, make sure everyone in the family observes the "no table" rule. Cats definitely know who the softies are.

Next, do not feed your cat scraps from the table. In fact, I do not recommend you feed him any at all. It can be hard on the digestive tract. To avoid bad kitty behavior, put all leftovers away when finished eating. Wash your dishes right away, or you might find him licking the dirty plates in the sink, they are always trying to be so helpful!

You may also try to get on the same schedule and feed your kitty dinner when you eat. That way both of you can enjoy a nice meal without the hassle.