

How Do I Make My Cat Indoor Only?

CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, discusses steps to helping cat be happy indoors.

By Jeanne Adlon

Posted: November 27, 2009, 3 a.m. EST

Q: My cat is an indoor/outdoor cat and I will be moving from a house to an apartment. How do I make her an indoor-only cat?

A: First of all, moving can make it easier for a cat to adjust to a new routine since everything in her life will be new. That said, one of my clients moved from a large house in Arizona to a two-bedroom apartment in Manhattan. Needless to say the whole household, which included their cats Oscar, Tiger and Elsa, had a lot of adjusting to do. Their kitties were used to running up and down stairs, sunning on an outdoor deck and enjoying the sounds and smells of nature.

Luckily, my client's new apartment was big enough for her to put two large carpeted cat treehouses right by a window with a beautiful view overlooking the Hudson River. The cats had lots of seagulls and other birds to watch outside while they listened to the soothing sounds of a special cat video my client had hooked up to a timer when they were out of the house. These were serious cat people!

Meanwhile, before your move, start keeping your indoor/outdoor cat inside for longer periods of time. Hopefully she will begin to get used to it. After the move, make the new home as fun as possible with plenty of petting, playtime and attention. Lots of new toys and treats should help as well. If you can't get a large treehouse in your new space, try a carpeted window perch for sunning and bird-watching. Also, if you haven't done so already, make sure her ID tag has the new address and phone number on it.

Remember, change is always hard, especially on a cat, so give her extra cuddles and treats. As always, I welcome your comments and stories.