

Keep Cat Comfy at Home While You're Out

CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, explains how to provide for your cat when you are away.

By Jeanne Adlon

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Q: How can I make it easier for my cat at home when I travel?

A: Cats are most comfortable in their own environment. It's best to leave your cat at home instead of boarding her, if you have the option to — providing that you arrange for a cat sitter or someone you trust to check in on her. Cats are creatures of habit and love things to stay just the way they are. That said, when you leave for any length of time, they miss you and your home routine. When I do my cat sitting, it is obvious that some cats are lonely, so I always like to give them a little extra TLC.

The good news is that there are ways you can make it easier for your cat when you travel. Many of my clients ask me if they should leave the TV on. I do not recommend it. The idea of leaving a large TV on makes me nervous — anything could happen, including a power surge. Instead, leave a small radio on, one that is not attached to a large entertainment system. One of my regular cat sitting charges is a cute domestic shorthair named Sweetie. His owners have taken my advice and leave an all-news station on when they are away. I often joke that Sweetie is the best-informed cat in New York City.

Also, buy some new toys before you leave, and ask whoever is coming to the house to unwrap them during each visit for your cat to play with. New toys always are fun. One neat thing some people do is to call and leave messages for their cats on the answering machine. I was in a client's home once when a call came in. The cat and I looked at the phone and then at each other, and I was sure I saw a very contented kitty.

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