

## New Year's Resolutions for Cats

**CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, has some great tips to start 2009 out right.**

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**Q:** What are some good New Year's resolutions I can make for my cat?

**A:** This is an excellent time of year to take a look at how you care for your kitties and see if a few changes can be made. I certainly did one busy New Year's Eve.

I always caution my clients to make sure their medications are safely stored away, and that includes vitamins. The holidays are always a crazy time for a cat sitter and I was in such a rush one day to get to my house calls that I dropped a vitamin on the floor, which promptly rolled out of sight. Since I share my home with cats, I will not leave with a pill anywhere for them to potentially swallow, so down I went on my hands and knees frantically trying to find it.

After despairing that it would not be found, I noticed my cat Roscoe staring at something. I followed his gaze and there was the pill under the sofa. I now slow down anytime I am taking any medications and double-check that they are out of harm's way before I leave the house. I also received a frantic call once from a client once whose cat had gotten into her bottle of ibuprofen. I told her to call poison control and make an emergency visit to the vet. Fortunately, everything was fine, but that was a close call.

For more resolutions, I would check to see if your cat's litterbox needs to be upgraded. Old boxes can accumulate crust and scratches. Also think about using environmentally safe cleaners for them. I always prefer ceramic or stainless-steel food dishes to plastic ones so now might be a good time to switch. Also don't forget to check the screens in your windows. A small tear could easily become a big one and a potential for real trouble.

Remember to take some time each day for interactive play and cuddling with your kitties and if they misbehave, please be patient. Yelling will only make them afraid of you. Try a small squeeze of a plant mister instead to let them know they are misbehaving. Last, but not least, I hope your resolutions include some fun treats for your kitties. Mine certainly do!