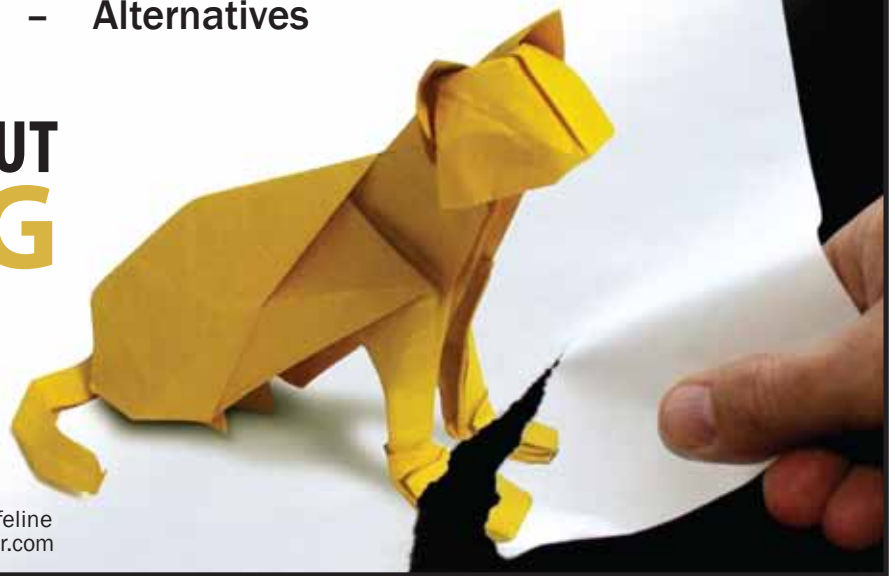


ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT DECLAWING YOUR CAT?

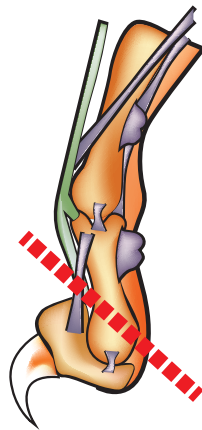


This brochure was designed by a group of veterinarians and feline behavior specialists. For more information visit www.cateducator.com

DECLAWING: To remove a cat's claws, it is necessary to amputate the third phalanx of each toe. Did you know that human nails grow from the skin, whereas cat nails grow from the bone? To prevent the claws from growing, the toes have to be amputated and the third phalanx bone is cut off.

No matter the technique or the surgical instrument used (laser or other), the consequences are the same. Even though pain protocols implemented both during and after the surgery are getting more and more effective, you can easily imagine that such an amputation causes pain that may sometimes become chronic and result in behavioral troubles such as aggression and improper elimination.

There are other OPTIONS that WORK



CLAW CAPS (Soft Paws®)

If you remain unconvinced of the efficiency of the alternatives suggested in this brochure, you can use Soft Paws® while you monitor the success of the scratching post. This option allows you to cover each claw with a small vinyl sheath. Although you can apply the nail covers yourself, please note that several veterinarians offer to do it for you at a low price.

For more information, see www.softpaws.com.

MY CAT DOES NOT USE ITS SCRATCHING POST. WHY?

People often hide the scratching post in the corner of the living room so as not to spoil the decor. However, cats claw to mark their territory. They want to put up a "Private Property" sign at the front of their territory so that it is clearly visible, not hidden in the corner. That is why the corner of the sofa at the entrance of the living room, or the doorframe (entrance of a territory), are often the target of the cat's scratching.

Moreover, a scratching post that is too small and that topples at the slightest touch will put off a cat. The scratching post replaces a tree. Hence, it must be very sturdy and high enough for the cat to stretch its spine to its full length (91 cm / 36 in) - another reason why the corner of the sofa, steady and appropriately tall, is appreciated by cats. If a cat has damaged a structure with claw marks, the mere sight of the vertical markings will entice it to keep scratching there. You need to repair the surface and erase the markings.



THE METHOD 3-10

3 easy steps to ensure your cat uses a scratching post in 10 days

1 STABILIZE THE SCRATCHING POST

As mentioned above, the post needs to be tall and stable. If you have already bought a post but it is inadequate, lift the corner of the sofa and stabilize your post by slipping its base under the leg of the sofa. Thus, not only will your post be more stable, but it will also be positioned in the perfect place, that is, at the corner of the sofa.

2 PLACE THE SCRATCHING POST IN THE RIGHT PLACE

Place the scratching post where cats like to claw (often at the entrance of a room), not where you would like your cat to do it. Since cats often target the corner of the sofa and the doorframes, that is where we should present them with the alternative that of a scratching post.

3 MAKE THE SCRATCHING POST APPEALING

Help your cat discover the joys of digging its claws on this post by playing with a stick toy around it or by putting a little catnip, or even food, on it.

HINT

If your cat has already shown interest in the corner of the sofa, make it unpleasant by installing a plastic sheet, aluminum foil or double-face tape on its corner or at its base. Keep it for around 10 days, which represent the time for your cat to adopt the scratching post you will place just beside. Please be aware that punishment and aversive products are often inefficient and may cause serious behavioral issues.

THE PROTECTION OF OUR CHILDREN Risks of serious injury to children made by claws are statistically very low and often overestimated. Furthermore, declawing will not contribute in lowering these risks because, as the great majority of behavior specialists say, once its claws are removed, a cat will have no other choice but to resort to the only method it has left to defend itself or to signify it wants to be left alone : biting. Biting is generally considered more serious than scratching. A bite often needs to be treated in a hospital because of the infection risks.

It is by educating your children to recognize and respect the cat's body language that you will greatly reduce the risks of injuries. Cats must be left alone if they:

- 🐾 Whip their tail;
- 🐾 Lower their ears;
- 🐾 Hiss or growl.



HINT

Whether you have children or children are at your home visiting, you might want to set up places where the children will be forbidden to bother the cats, where they can easily retreat instead of scratching to show that they do not want to be disturbed.

There are several **ALTERNATIVES** that work

The greatest proof that alternatives do work is in the millions of cat owners who live in one of the 39 countries around the world that prohibit or consider declawing unethical. In those countries (France, Germany, United Kingdom, Australia, Brazil, etc.), owners have learned to practice solutions that guarantee that the furniture is not damaged and children's protection is not threatened.

WHAT ABOUT DECLAWING AND RELINQUISHMENT? Some believe that outlawing declawing would cause an increase in the number of abandoned cats. Almost all studies show that this is not the case. Shelters in 5 Californian cities that outlawed declawing in 2010 have reported a decrease in the number of relinquishments in the 5 years following the new law and have even reported decreases as much as 43%. Please be aware that the two main behavioral reasons for relinquishments are inappropriate eliminations and aggression, and both are problems that have been known to be caused by declawing.

DECLAWING MAY HAVE CONSEQUENCES ON THE HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR OF YOUR CAT.

Thank you
to our
partners

The  **Paw Project**

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FELINE BEHAVIOR

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