

Tips to care for outdoor cats

Pet preferences vary across the world, but dogs and cats are beloved companion animals in many corners of the globe. According to the 2022 Statista Global Consumer Survey, dogs have a good lead over their feline counterparts in the United States, mainland China, the United Kingdom, and Japan. However, in Germany, cats and dogs are kept by a nearly equal number of pet owners.

Even though cats may not be as popular as dogs, they are widely found in homes. They also may be spending time outside of homes. While there are plenty of feral cats, or those that have grown up outdoors with little to no social interaction with humans, even many domesticated cats spend ample time outdoors.

Most veterinarians feel it is safer to keep cats indoors, where they are not exposed to disease or trauma. However, many cats are simply not happy without fresh air. In such instances, here's how pet parents can care for cats who need some breathing room.

Leash-train the cat

The American Humane Society suggests leash-training cats that want to be outdoors. Much like having a dog on a leash prevents the pet from running off and getting lost or injured, cats who may be a little too independent for their own good can be curtailed with leashes.

Vaccinate and fix the animal

Cats that are exposed to the outdoors are more susceptible to diseases that can be harmful or even fatal. Speak with a vet about which vaccines the cat will require if he or she is going to be spending considerable time outdoors.

Also, while it is recommended for all companion animals to be spayed or neutered, it is especially important for those with access to the outdoors to prevent unwanted mating that can exacerbate overpopulation issues. Plus, animals that are fixed are less likely to roam or fight.

Create a shelter

In addition to providing free access to the home by way of a cat door, outdoor access cats may benefit from a home in the yard. This can protect the cat from weather or other animals. A pet owner can build a shelter or purchase pre-made varieties that resemble a chicken coop. It's also best to ensure cats have access to fresh water while outside. Regularly inspect the shelter to keep it clean and in good repair.



Consider a "catio"

Some cats will be satisfied with something that lets fresh air in without having to be completely outdoors. A "catio" is an outdoor ledge or enclosure for cats that is covered by grating or mesh, according to Habitat Have. It can be attached to a window or be freestanding in an area of the yard, providing a lounging spot that is outdoors but protected.

Provide identification

Cat caregivers can microchip cats and ensure they are wearing the proper identification. If the cat cannot find its way home, there is a greater chance the animal will be found if identification is present or a chip has been installed.

Although cats are safest indoors, with some precautions, cats can enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.

**"We are dedicated to provide our customers, staff and community with more than "just another place".
We are dedicated to superior customer service, integrity, and professionalism."**

LAWN & GARDEN ♦ OFF-ROAD ♦ BOATS

**WEST PLAINS
MARINE**

4504 US Hwy 160
West Plains, MO

westplainsmarine.net



**Locally Owned & Operated
Doing Business for 27 Years!**

Secure Finance Application

HUMMINBIRD LOWRANCE MINN KOTA MERCURY GARMIN LOWE BOATS