



Ten Purrfectly Good Reasons Why Your Cats Are Safer Indoors

Cat guardians often feel they are depriving their feline companions by restricting them to a life indoors. Many are convinced that cats like to hunt and it's natural for cats to be outside. They see other cats outside and they imagine the fun their cats might have with new things to experience and explore. But please consider that for cats, it can be a dangerous world out there.

- 1. Traffic:** Thousands of cats die each year after being hit by cars, and countless more are seriously injured or permanently disabled.
- 2. Vehicles:** In cold weather, a cat may climb inside the hood of a car or truck to warm him or herself near the engine and then be injured or killed when the vehicle is turned on. Antifreeze is poisonous to cats, and its palatability attracts them to it. Curious cats will sometimes jump inside stopped trucks or cars with open doors to explore and end up lost and far from home.
- 3. Critter Control/Animal Wardens:** Some people see all outdoor cats as public nuisances, disease carriers, or predators that threaten local birds and may call the pound to have them removed.
- 4. Presumed Homelessness or Need:** Other people who love and are concerned about cats may mistake domestic cats without collars and identification tags for strays and take them to shelters.
- 5. Pesticides/lawn fertilizers:** Many of the chemicals used to treat lawns are poisonous to birds and animals alike. Because of their grooming habits, cats are especially at risk: while grooming, they may ingest the chemicals, sometimes with fatal results.
- 6. Poisoned foods and rat bait:** Mice, rats, squirrels, or other rodents may have eaten poisoned bait commonly used by gardeners and homeowners and themselves become poisoned bait to the cats who hunt them.
- 7. Predators:** Vicious dogs, coyotes, foxes, hawks, and even owls prey on cats.
- 8. B-B and pellet guns, slingshots, arrows, bottles, and rocks:** These are just some of the weapons that are used on cats by those children and teenagers who consider torturing cats a recreational sport.
- 9. Catfights:** Domestic cats may unknowingly invade territories claimed by strays and be injured in fights.
- 10. Hiding:** Outdoors, cats that are elderly, injured, or sick may feel more vulnerable to predators and find safe places to hide where it may be difficult for even their own guardians to locate them. Sometimes a cat may succumb to its illness, thus dying alone and scared without his or her family's knowledge. Monitoring your cat's health becomes more difficult when he or she is allowed to roam outdoors. Vomiting, bowel and urinary changes, and increased thirst are just a few of the symptoms of sickness that can go undetected when your cat goes outdoors.

If you feel you really must let your cat outside, please consider an outdoor enclosure. Even with an enclosure, your cat needs a secure collar and an identification tag with clear printing in case a house door is inadvertently left open. Microchips are a good back up form of identification, but only shelters with scanners can read them, so they should not be used in place of old-fashioned ID collars and tags.