



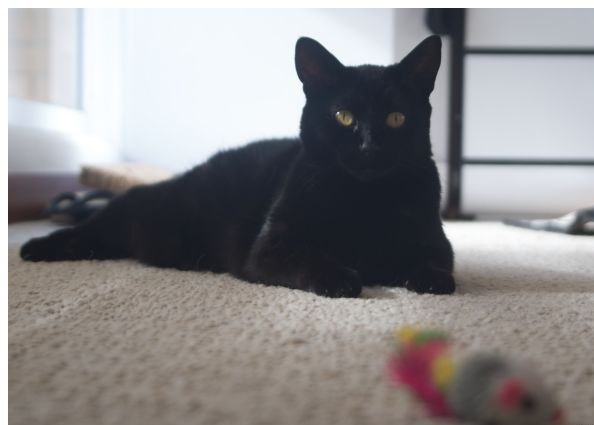
## Indoor Pet Initiative

# Increasing the Activity

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## Why play with your cat?

- To develop a bond with your cat.
- To increase the quality of life of your cat.
- To help improve behavior and health, reduce the incidence of obesity, and prevent future problems.
- To make your cat active during the day so that he/she will sleep longer and bother you less during the night.
- To help your cat vent excess energy, which should decrease the "wild frenzies" that often occur, especially in the late evenings.
- To teach your cat to play in a controlled environment and decrease the likeliness that he/she will "play bite" or attack you or others.



## Helpful hints

- Do not reward bad behavior with play. Only elicit play when your cat is calm, quiet, and behaving appropriately.
- Do not use your hands, fingers, or other body parts as toys, or kitty will learn to bite and scratch them. Stop play that gets too rough, and resume when your cat is calm, quiet, and behaving appropriately.
- Set aside a specific time each day and make play time a part of your daily schedule. Your cat will be less anxious the rest of the day in anticipation of your special play time.
- Ask family members to participate in the fun and share the responsibility of cat ownership.

## Ideas for increasing your cat's activity

- Teach your cat to play fetch. Attach a favorite toy to a line, throw the toy, and reel it back in as needed. Your cat may learn to bring the toy back to you because he/she is rewarded when you throw the toy again!

- Attach a toy to a shoelace and drag it around the house. Don't forget to drag it onto high locations where your cat is allowed to climb. Many cats will chase it wherever it goes! A shoelace with a knot at the end also works, especially for those bug-lovers!
- Help your cat push a ball around on a smooth surface, such as hard floors or in a bathtub.
- Encourage your cat to run back and forth between you and another person by providing a reward when he/she reaches each of you. You can use a treat or a favorite toy as the reward, but don't forget to reward!
- Throw a piece of dry cat food or a treat across the floor. Watch kitty chase it every time!
- Hang a toy by a string from a doorknob or use a hanger on top of a doorway. Help make it interesting for your cat by giving it a shake to make it move.
- Place a paper bag or cardboard box onto the floor. When your cat goes inside to explore, scratch the outside with your finger and he/she will try to catch you!
- Hide a toy under a cushion or blanket. Make it move and entice your cat to dig for it.
- Take advantage of any object your cat likes to play with by making it move!
- Many cats will chase a laser pointer for hours. Make sure you do not point the laser in the eyes of any people or animals. You may consider discontinuing its use if your cat becomes anxious or paranoid about seeing the laser when it is not turned on.
- If your cat is confident and easy-going, try playing hide-and-seek. Pretend to hide, and peek out frequently. Allow your cat to watch you sneak to closer hiding spots. Finally, come out of your final hiding spot and tickle your cat. If your cat enjoys the game, he/she will hide and then pursue you! Try not to startle your cat, and always finish the game with calm interaction.



Whatever toy or game your cat enjoys, try not to use up all of the fun at once. Resist the temptation to leave kitty's favorite toys out all day. Instead, leave a few toys out during the day, but only bring out the favorites once a day or even once a week. They will remain fun for much longer!

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