

How to Keep My Furniture Safe

We understand that it can be expensive to constantly replace furniture cats damage by scratching. But, don't worry! There are management & training techniques to avoid your cat scratching your furniture.

It's important to understand that cats need to scratch things – it's a natural behavior that's done for various reasons:

- to slough off the husks of dead claws
- to mark their territory
- to stretch their bodies
- to expend energy
- to relieve stress

The first step to inhibit your cat from scratching furniture, is to provide them with multiple highly desirable places to perform this natural behavior. There are many different types of scratchers – here are our two favorite options:

- **Sisal Scratching Post**
 - We recommend a vertical post that is at least 3 feet high to provide optimum stretching
 - This material is designed & built to last, they are typically higher in price which is offset by their durability
- **Cardboard Scratchers**
 - Cats do tend to love these scratchers & they are very inexpensive
 - Due to the material – they do not last long & can be somewhat messy

The next step is to get your cat to use the scratchers & **reward** him/her with lots of treats when they do! Here are some recommendations on how to do that:

- Scratchers should be placed in or near areas that your cat spends a lot of their time – especially where they relax or sleep
- To further attract your cat to the scratcher – sprinkle some catnip on it or use a scratch attractant
- When you notice your cat scratching an inappropriate object – gently pick your cat up & place him/her in front of the scratcher
 - Cats are capable of observational learning, so if your cat doesn't start scratching the scratcher – demonstrate it for them!

Finally, you should make your furniture *unattractive* to your cat. You can do this by applying unpleasant textures or scents to the object so your cat is more likely to avoid it. Our recommendations are:

- Furniture-safe double sided tape
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic wrap
- Citrus scents

Other things to keep in mind:

- Trimming your cat's nails every 2 weeks will make the need to scratch objects decrease



- There are different types of scratchers – such as horizontal designs, wall-mounted, door hangers, etc. Get a variety for your cat to keep them mentally stimulated!
- We recommend avoiding scratchers that may resemble something you do not want your cat to claw – such as a wooden chair, wicker basket, rug, etc.
- Using claw caps on your cat’s nails is an immediate solution to keep them from scratching furniture
 - These are vinyl sheaths you need to glue on your cat’s nails – they’ll fall off when the nail grows too long so you’ll have to continue to apply them after every nail trim
 - Note: claw caps should not be used on outdoor or indoor-outdoor cats

Source: Animal Behavior College