



## Issue: Environmental Enrichment

Cats can live satisfying indoor-only lives, but it is important to enrich your cat's environment so they have plenty of opportunities to explore, play, investigate, problem solve and exercise their minds and bodies every day.

Choice is an important part of enrichment. Cats should be able to choose which comfy spot they want to curl up in for this nap, which sunbeam they want to lie in right now and which toy appeals to them. Just like in people, preferences can change with time – or even from one hour to the next! There are lots of ways you can allow your cat to engage in natural behaviors in your home. Here are a few suggestions to try out!

### Wand Toys (also called “fishing pole toys”)

These are great for interactive play where cats can stalk, chase, grab and wrestle – and no human hands involved! For extra fun, try to make the toy “behave” like a mouse or a bird.

### Puzzle Feeders

Cats naturally spend a lot of time hunting for their food, so rather than feeding them in a bowl it's great to engage those hunting instincts and feed them with a puzzle feeder. There are some commercial options, but you can also make your own with a shoebox, paper towel roll, plastic water bottle or an egg carton.

Puzzle feeders can also slow down fast eaters and reduce the risk of throwing up from eating too quickly. Some will also work for wet food if your cat is a wet food eater.

### Cardboard Boxes

Cats love boxes. When you get deliveries, let your cat play in the box for a few days.

### Water Station

Finally, some cats prefer moving water to still water, so try out a fountain to make sure your cat stays hydrated.

**For more information:**

International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants: [m.iaabc.org](http://m.iaabc.org)

Certified Applied Animal Behaviorists: [corecaab.org](http://corecaab.org)