

# Outside the Box!

What your kitty is trying to tell you when they have litter box issues

## 1 I don't feel well



See your vet to make sure your kitty is not sick

**Rule out a medical issue first when you see a behavior change in your kitty**

Sudden behavior changes are not normal for any kitty, and going outside the litter box can be a sign of a medical issue. Take your kitty to the vet for a wellness exam and note any inappropriate elimination, straining to go, or blood in the urine. A urinalysis may be needed along with blood work or other diagnostics to ensure your kitty is cleared medically with no physical issues causing their behavior change.

## 2 There is an issue with my litter box...



**Something may not be right about the litter box set up!**

**Too messy and smelly** - think about a porta-potty that is really dirty: would you want to go there? Make sure to scoop the box at least once a day, and replace the litter completely at least once a month after cleaning the box with mild soap and water.



**Location, Location, Location!**

**Too noisy** - If kitties are scared of noises, don't place their box next to a noisy washing machine. You would want peace and quiet when you go to the bathroom too! Did the box move location? Changes are best done slowly, or by adding more boxes.



**Not enough choice** - the general rule is to have +1 more box than you have cats. So 2 cats = 3 litter boxes.

**Covered vs uncovered** - test a few different choices to see what your kitty likes best!

**The box is too small** - it should be 1.5 x your kitty's length & height to fit them properly.

**Different types of litter** - there are clumping, non-clumping, clay, wood, corncob, crystals, pellets, scented, unscented...

The list goes on and on so try them methodically to change variables one at a time so you start to understand what your kitty prefers!



**Litter attractant** is also good to add to the litter boxes to entice your kitty to go exactly where they should!

## 3 I smell something ... Clean soiled areas well

**Cats will be attracted to areas that smell like them, so make sure to deep clean!**



**Use an ENZYMATIC CLEANER on all soiled areas.** This will kill the bacteria and residual odor so your kitty is not enticed to do their business there again.

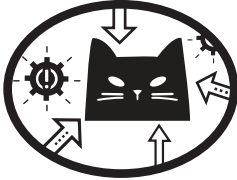
**Buy a blacklight to do a review of your home to make sure you catch all the stains.**

If your kitty returns and has additional accidents in the same spot, temporarily place a litter box there - then slowly move it to a place where it is best suited. You can also temporarily place a small bowl of food in the spot where the accident happened once it has been cleaned. Cats don't eat where they use the bathroom, so this is a good way to teach them the proper place to go!

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## 4 Something has changed!



**Unwanted behaviors can happen due to changes at home**

**There are many reasons that could cause your kitty stress, but some common ones are:**

- A new person in the house - like a baby or a spouse, partner, or roommate
- A person has left the house - either permanently or temporarily
- New furniture, drapes, or flooring
- Rearranging the furniture
- Moving litter boxes
- Changing litter
- Moving to a new house or apartment
- A new animal in the house
- An animal has recently left the house
- Outdoor critters are seen outside windows as a threat - cats, dogs, raccoons, etc.
- An outdoor cat in heat can be seen and heard and is causing stress

## 5 Now it is time to develop your Action Plan 🐾



**There are many things we can do to help kitty through this stressful time!**

**Get the basics done:**

Rule out any medical issues

Clean well with an enzymatic cleaner and use a blacklight to find every stain

**Make those areas that were soiled unattractive to your kitty now that they are clean**

**Use "Aversion Therapy" with deterrents:**

- double-sided tape - stick this to flooring, walls, furniture - cats hate sticky stuff!
- aluminum foil - place this in that area - they hate the texture and sound!
- SSSCAT motion-activated air deterrent - makes a poof of air when triggered
- Citrus and Bitter Apple Sprays - cats hate these scents!

**Make the litter box areas more desirable**

**Use "Attraction Therapy" with the following tactics:**

- Make sure you have the right kind of litter and litter box that your kitty likes
- Place the box in the area inappropriate elimination if possible. Move it 1-2 feet per day until it gets to the suitable spot you plan to have it regularly
- Add a Pheromone spray or diffuser to create a calm environment
- Use litter attractant to draw kitty to the right place to go

**At the same time, identify the stress-causing situation or triggers and remove them**

- Remove access to windows where outdoor critters can antagonize kitty
- Motion-activated lights and sprinklers can be great outdoor critter deterrents too!
- Do scent sharing for slow introductions to new animals and family members
- Give extra love to kitties left behind after death or loss of animals and family
- Add Play Therapy to reduce anxious energy - AM and PM sessions daily

**If you need help with your Action Plan, ask your vet or a feline behaviorist for help**

Don't feel discouraged, stay strong and positive. Your extra efforts now will help you and your kitty through this tough time, and strengthen your bond forever!

