



Feline Litter-Tray Audit

Number, size, litter, location and hygiene: the setup most cats actually want

PETSLIKEMINE
BEHAVIOUR & ANXIETY

CAT(S) _____	NUMBER OF CATS _____	VET PRACTICE _____
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Once your vet is happy nothing medical is driving it, the litter tray itself is the single highest-yield thing you can change. House soiling is the commonest behavioural reason cats are given up, and the fix is usually practical and within your control. Walk through the audit, then let your cat be the final judge.

RULE OUT ILLNESS FIRST

A cat that suddenly stops using its tray is often telling you it is unwell, not being difficult. A male cat straining, crying, or passing little or no urine is a genuine same-day emergency. Get a vet check before treating this as a husbandry problem.

NUMBER AND PLACEMENT

- One tray per cat, plus one spare (so two trays for one cat). Best practice, not a hard law
- Do not line trays up in a row: cats read a row as one big toilet, with no real choice
- Spread them around the house, on different floors and in different rooms
- Openings at right angles or round a corner, not facing each other, so each feels private
- No cat should have to queue, share, or pass a cat it dislikes to reach a tray

SIZE, TYPE AND LITTER

- Bigger is better, and most shop-bought trays are too small. Aim for about 1.5x your cat's nose-to-tail-base length
- A large, low storage box makes a cheap, roomy tray; an arthritic cat needs a low, cut-down side to step over
- Covered or open: most cats do not mind. Open trays are easier to scoop and monitor
- Fine, soft, sand-like, unscented clumping litter, at least 3cm deep so they can dig and cover
- Skip plastic liners, slotted grills and deodorising powders, which many cats dislike

HYGIENE IS PROBABLY THE BIGGEST LEVER OF ALL

Scoop solids and clumps at least once a day, every day, and wash the whole tray out every one to four weeks with hot water and a mild, unscented soap, never strong or ammonia-based cleaners. A cat's sense of smell is far keener than yours, so what reads as "fresh" to you can read as "tainted" to the cat. Many "behavioural" soiling cases ease on cleaning frequency alone.

AUDIT GRID: ONE ROW PER TRAY

TRAY / LOCATION	SIZE & TYPE	LITTER & DEPTH	LAST DEEP-CLEANED	USED? (Y/N)
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

LET THE CAT BE THE JUDGE: THE LITTER CAFETERIA

"Most cats prefer X" is never "your cat needs X". If the default has not won your cat over, set out two or three trays a little apart, each with a different fine substrate, keep food and water bowls well away, and log over a week which your cat chooses. Introduce any change gradually, alongside the old tray, not by whipping the familiar one away.

How to use. A large, open, scrupulously clean tray, fine unscented clumping litter 3cm deep, in a quiet safe spot away from food and noise, one more than you have cats. Then let your cat vote. A wellbeing aid, not a substitute for veterinary advice.

MEDICAL FIRST, THEN BIGGER, CLEANER, AND LET THE CAT CHOOSE