



## The “Scoop” on Litter Boxes

- **The rule of thumb for the number of litter boxes is: ONE PER CAT, PLUS ONE.** Extra litter boxes are necessary because some cats like to defecate in one and urinate in another. Others will not use a box that has already been used by another cat.
- **Clean the litter boxes DAILY.** The single most common reason for a cat's refusal to use a litter box is because the box is dirty. Non-clumping litter should be scooped daily and the litter box emptied and washed every few days. Clumping litter should also be scooped daily and the litter box washed when soiled.
- **Choose a litter that appeals to the cat.** Most cats prefer the texture of the sand-like scooping litters - but each cat is different and your cat may prefer a different texture. Be sure to select a brand that clumps into a firm ball, making scooping easier and cleaner. **As a health precaution for kittens that might be prone to ingest the litter, use a non-clumping litter until the kitten is four months old.**
- **Many cats prefer unscented litter.** Perfumed, chemical scents often repel cats. When you wash the litter box, use hot water and a mild dishwashing liquid. Do not use harsh chemicals that will leave a lingering odor, such as vinegar or bleach.
- **The litter box should be at least 22" x 16" for an adult cat.** Bigger is definitely better when it comes to litter boxes. Many cats find the litter box liners irritating.
- **Place litter boxes in quiet, private places.** It should be easy for your cat to get to his box and he should not have to be worried about being disturbed by children or ambushed by other pets. Noisy areas near washing machines, furnaces, or under stairs may frighten the cat away from the box. A house with several stories should have a litter box on each floor. **NEVER** place litter boxes near food and water dishes.
- **While kittens have an innate instinct to use an easily raked substance as their litter, they may also choose other, more convenient, locations.** You should limit their territory until they learn that the litter box is the only acceptable place to eliminate. Like small children, they should not be expected to travel very far to find their toilet areas.
- **When introducing a new cat into the home, initially confine the cat to one room with its litter box, bed, food and water.** When the cat has used the litter box several times and seems curious about the rest of the home, then you can let him explore.
- **Once you have decided on the placement for the litter boxes — *don't move them!***

If you have any questions regarding your cat's use of his box, please call us!