

CATS: Indoor Only vs Outdoor Access

Keeping your feline friend indoors is a key factor in keeping them safe and healthy while also keeping wildlife safe from them. If you have children in your life this can be especially important so they do not have to go through the grief of losing their furry best friend either.

KEY REASONS TO AVOID OUTDOOR ROAMING

- Keeps them safe / increases lifespan
- Saves you money by minimizing medical issues
- Removes the worry

Medical Concerns: When allowed outside your cat is at risk for a number of contagious diseases such as FIV, FeLV, Rabies, Herpesvirus, etc. They are also likely to come in contact with parasites like giardia, coccidia, fleas, ticks, worms, etc. But even simple spats with another animal or scrape by a branch can result in wounds that can drastically increase veterinary costs for an owner.

Predators: We hear about so many loved pets with sad endings from predator animals such as Coyotes, Owls, Eagles. Even dogs and other outdoor cats may seriously harm or even take the life of your kitty.

Cars/Roadways: Automobiles are the other evil that cats can fall victim to and take the lives of pets each day.

Eco System Disruption and Imbalance: When a new cat is introduced to an outdoor area they become a new predator to wildlife such as birds. In order for various wild species to survive and thrive without a risk for extinction balance in the ecosystem must remain balanced. A predatory shift can damage this, especially if the balance was already off due to a higher amount of other similarly ranked predatory animals. Even if balanced originally - a cat ends up competing against the natural wild predators that hunt the same food to survive.

Can your kitty be happy and can they live a full life inside? Absolutely. CASA knows this well since cats which come to the shelter live loose indoors with no access to the outdoors beyond the secure catio. We receive many cats which have lived their lives outdoors, sometimes only outside. Some show the scars of that too. After a short transition period, the mass majority truly enjoy the safety of life inside. We even have had cats that have come from outside situations who are now too scared to walk near a door anymore due to their outdoor experiences. It can be fun – until it's not.

Bringing natural instincts and enrichment inside: There are many enrichment items you can use for indoor cats if your kitty needs more to do. Cat grass, large cat trees, cat wall shelves, fish tanks with secure lids, kitty toys, catnip, remote control mice, feather teaser stick toys, bird watcher TV and more.

Catios and cat-proof fencing: You also have the option to create a "Catio" for your indoor cat so they have a secure outside area to lounge around or play in without the true danger of the outdoors. They can be as simple as an old used dog run (with a secure top) attached to the side of your home that has a cat door (maybe in a window) which provides direct access to the secure containment unit. A lock on the man door of the dog run will allow you to clean or upgrade the area inside, while keeping others from opening it inappropriately. There is another product known as a "cat fence" or "coyote rollers" where a cat-proof addition is added to the top of your fully fenced yard. This keeps cats from being able to get over the fence but allows them the enjoyment of your yard. Owls and eagles may still pose a risk with this type of enclosure.



LIST OF PRE-MADE PENS, RUNS, AND DO-IT-YOURSELF KITS:

LOCAL

Catio Spaces Located in Seattle, WA. <https://catiospaces.com>

Pet Enclosures Northwest Located in Shoreline, WA. <http://www.petenclosuresnorthwest.com>

OTHER

CatsOnDeck (FL) Modular cat enclosures. Expandable and portable for RV use. <http://www.catsondeck.com>

C&D Pet Products (CA) Commercial kits and diagrams for enclosures available in various sizes and prices. Also offers kitten enclosures. <http://www.cdpets.com>

General Cage Corporation (IN) (no website) A folding, portable, three story pen available through mail order catalogs, or write manufacturer at 238 N 29th St, Elwood, IN, 46036.

Habitat Haven (MI) Commercial kits for indoor and outdoor cat runs and enclosures. <http://www.thecatsden.net>

Kitty Walk System, Inc. (NY) Various commercial enclosures for cats and other small animals. Most enclosures are preassembled. <http://www.kittywalksystems.com>

Oscillot North America (MD) Simple rolling safety system for the top of your fence. <https://oscillotamerica.com>

Purrfect Fence (MI) Commercial kits and instructions for free-standing cat fence systems. Also offers professional installation in certain regions. And now offering "Cat-Proofer" system for converting existing fencing to make it escape-proof. <http://www.purrfectfence.com>

Safe Cat Outdoor Enclosure (FL) Detailed drawings and descriptions to create custom outdoor enclosures for cats and other small animals. <http://www.just4cats.com>

SunCATcher Enclosures (WI) Free-standing outdoor cat enclosures for yard or patio. <http://www.cagesbydesign.com>

WINDOW BOXES AND PERCHES:

Cats With An Altitude (KY) Handcrafted window patio enclosures. <http://www.catswithanaltitude.com>

Habitat Haven (MI) Commercial kits for outdoor cat window boxes. <http://www.thecatsden.net>

** Remember to check your local pet supply stores and search for online stores who may carry a variety of window boxes and perches as well.*

CATIO IDEAS / DIY:

Catio Showcase Website showcasing many great catios that people have created for their beloved cats in order to inspire you to create your own. [Visit the Catio Tour](#)

Pinterest Website known for great DIY inspirations. Search "catio" or "cat enclosure" for photos and do it yourself tutorials. <http://www.pinterest.com>

Pre-made Catio options on Amazon Order, assemble, and attach it to your house! <https://www.amazon.com>

Lists are provided as a resource and do not imply official endorsement, nor have they been tested by CASA.

