

## Setting Up for Litter Box Success

### How do I teach my cat to use the litter box?

Set your litter box up for success so your cat will easily learn to use it. Although cats prefer to keep their living spaces clean, roughly 10% of cats develop litter box problems, but you can avoid that by following these guidelines.



### 1. Provide enough litter boxes

- Each cat in your home needs at least two litter boxes.
- Each box should be large enough for your cats to easily enter and move around inside.
- Your cat may not appreciate a liner or hood, so make adjustments as necessary.

### 2. Clean litter boxes often

- Each litter box must be scooped at least once daily, but preferably more frequently.
- The cleaner the litter box, the less likely your cat is to develop an aversion to using it.
- Once a week, deep clean all boxes with warm water and baking soda or unscented soap before completely replacing the litter.

### 3. Place litter boxes in socially significant areas

- Your cat is more likely to use a litter box in a socially significant area of your home.
- This includes areas you frequent and that are easy for your cat to access.
- Ensure the path to each box is clear and feels safe to your cat.

### 4. Use the type of litter your cat prefers

- Cater to your cat's preference by using the litter that is most comfortable for them.
- Fill each box one to two inches deep with fresh litter.
- Note that cat preferences vary. Your cat may prefer fine grain instead of clumping or unscented instead of aromatic blends.

### What if my cat eliminates outside of the box?

Accidents happen, but repeated accidents may be a sign that something is wrong. If your cat is having trouble using the litter box, follow these steps:

1. Ensure you are following the above guidelines for success. If not, make adjustments so that your cat is more comfortable using the litter box.
2. Litter box problems are commonly the result of medical problems. Consult your veterinarian sooner rather than later to rule out or treat any underlying conditions.
3. Contact a Certified Feline Training and Behavior Specialist for help problem-solving litter box problems related to stress, frustration, or communication issues.

For more resources, check out <https://sfhumanesociety.org/behavior-library/>