



Outside Time for Indoor Cats

It's widely accepted that indoor cats live longer than their outdoor counterparts. Outdoor cats face potentially fatal threats from every direction: cars, roaming dogs, poison, coyotes, antifreeze, hawks, and other cats. They can contract diseases or injuries that they can contract from their own kind, including feline distemper, FIV, feline infectious peritonitis, upper respiratory infections, heartworm, abscesses, and more. This is not to mention the less deadly but still problematic fleas, ticks, and internal parasites to which felines can play host. Here are some creative tips to give your cat their quality outside exposure without risking life and paw.

Keep it Simple

- **Open a Window or Door**

As long as the windows screens are solidly in place, this simple solution allows your cat to enjoy many of the benefits of the outdoors with none of the risks and requires little effort. Lying on a window sill, your cat can watch and hear the birds, soak up sunlight, and feel the soft breeze ruffle through their fur.

- **Install a Window Box or Sill**

Numerous easy-to-install commercial products will enhance your cat's window-basking experience. A carpeted ledge gives them a wider, comfortable perch from which to survey their kingdom. An actual window box fits inside a regular window and extends out from the house, giving a greater sense of being outside and a wider view of their world. Birds and bugs sometimes even land on top of the window box, giving your cat a vicarious predatory thrill.

- **Take Your Cat for Walks on a Leash**

This is surprisingly do-able for some cats, and significantly expands your cat's horizons. Many cats adapt well to walking on leash and can even be trained to heel. Some cats hate the whole leash concept and will not have anything at all to do with it. If your cat is four paws against it, then this is not the best way to provide outside time for them.

Make it Sublime

- **Build an Attached Cattery**

Create a wooden frame and cover it with sturdy woven wire fencing with a half inch by one inch mesh. Build the structure seven feet high for ease of cleaning, and install a cat door in the sliding door. Install several wooden benches at various heights so your cat can make use of the vertical space.

Our friends at [Community Concern for Cats](#) have some great resources for building your own cattery/catio!

- **Add a Cat Tube**

Animal Rescue Foundation

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Attach sections of sturdy eight inch wide plastic pipe together to allow your cat free access to different areas. Cats love these tunnels so much that they spend as much time playing in it as they do getting from one place to another.

- **Fence the Yard**

There are several options for fencing a yard. Cat fence products can offer a sturdy, attractive, and effective means of keeping cats confined in an already fenced yard.

Even More Options

Bring the outdoors to indoor cats!

- Allow sunbeams and fresh air to enter through securely screened windows and doors.
- Maintain fish in an aquarium for their viewing pleasure — but out of their reach in case they have predatory tendencies.
- Satisfy your cat's herbivore habits by growing greens for them to munch.
- Play a nature-watching video for your cat to appease their urges.

Providing your cat with safe outdoor experiences (or outdoor-inspired experiences) enriches their quality of life while also ensuring their life lasts as long as possible.