

# Crafty Corner

## Tube Treat Tower

Want to help make life more interesting for your cat? Create a puzzle feeder! Just like dogs, cats can become bored or frustrated being left alone at home for hours each day. Puzzle feeders entertain and challenge cats by making them work to find food.

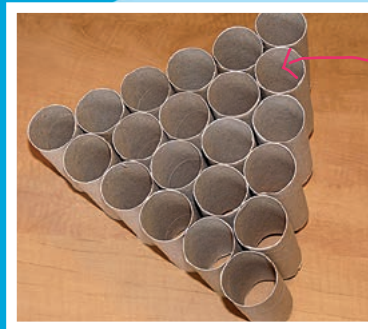
### Supplies:

- Toilet paper rolls
- Tape, white glue or a glue gun
- An empty cardboard box
- One or two large rocks
- Cat treats



### Steps:

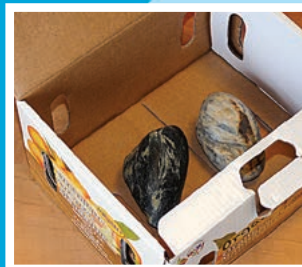
1. Practise making a pyramid from toilet paper rolls. Each row should have one less roll than the row below it. Use as many toilet paper rolls as you want. The larger the pyramid, the more places to hide food for your cat!
2. Once you have the arrangement you want, tape or glue the rolls together. (Using a glue gun will require adult supervision.)
3. Fill an empty cardboard box with one or two large rocks to weigh it down. The box should be at least as long as the bottom row of your pyramid.



This pyramid is made from 21 toilet paper rolls.

4. Tape or glue the pyramid to the cardboard box. The box will help keep your puzzle feeder from sliding across the floor or tipping over when your cat tries to get at the treats.
5. Now for the fun part! Hide a few treats in the toilet paper rolls. Then sit back and watch as your cat tries to figure out where the treats are and how to get at them.

**Tip:** Change which rolls you fill and how many treats you put in each one so your cat has a different challenge each time.



# Have you ever heard of a snuffle mat?

Sometimes it's called snuffling, other times **nose work**. It's a dog's way of using his sense of smell to find a reward – like treats!

A snuffle mat is a toy that lets dogs express their natural behaviour. Searching for his food can be more satisfying for your dog than simply scarfing it out of a bowl.

Snuffle mats aren't just for dogs – cats love them too. Even guinea pigs, rabbits and ferrets can enjoy snuffling on mini mats.



## Make a mat!

Snuffle mats can be found at your local pet supply store, or online (like some of the examples on this page from Amazon).

**But if you want a fun project, they're also easy to make yourself!**

1. Start with a **rubber sink mat with holes**.
2. Use about 1.5 metres of **fleece fabric cut into strips**, which you can loop and knot through the holes in the mat.
3. Make a basic mat or try different shapes and patterns. Check out **YouTube** for some great instructional videos!



## Start snuffling!

The first time you introduce the snuffle mat, have your pet watch while you sprinkle a few pieces of kibble or treats on top of the mat.

Once they've found the kibble, play again – but this time hide some of the food underneath the flaps of fleece.

As your dog catches on, make the game more challenging each time you play!

### Safety tip!

Watch your pet while they snuffle. If left alone, they may chew and swallow the fleece, which can be harmful.



# Help your cats climb the walls

**W**hile dogs are content to live with us at ground level, cats are different. Cats love to climb, balance on ledges and sleep on shelves up high.



Why? Because your cat's ancestors were jungle cats. These wild cats perched in trees and climbed rocky ledges where they could overlook the forest floor, watching for prey. Trees and cliffs were also safe places to hang out, groom and sleep.

Today's house cats still behave like wild cats. Yet, we don't often think from a cat's perspective. If we did, we would provide furniture and "trees" cats can climb with places to hide, perch and nap. Think like a cat and provide vertical spaces.



Paradise for cats! You could transform your whole home with wall and ceiling cat walkways. See examples at [goldtatze.de](http://goldtatze.de) from Germany.



Cats like to sit up high and watch the action.



FROM IKEAHACKERS.NET

Add shelves along a wall. Buy them ready-made at home stores or places like IKEA and Amazon.



Stack wooden crates or cardboard boxes.



FROM AMAZON.CA

Make window ledges wider so your cats can sit and look outside. You can also get window shelves.



Make space on bookshelves just for your cats. Add a towel, carpet scrap or pillow for a bed.



Be creative. Add a shelf over a doorway where space is wasted anyway. Mount crates on the wall as steps up.



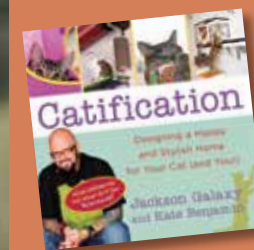
Build or buy a cat tree.

Cats like to hide sometimes. So make private nooks too, like this one from K&H Manufacturing.



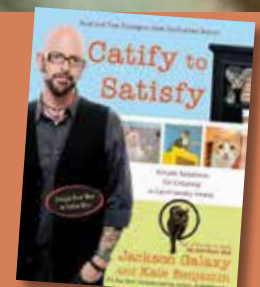
FROM STORE.STYLETAILS.COM

Build steps or a ramp along a wall so your cat can use the vertical space.



## Need more ideas?

These two books – *Catification* and *Catify to Satisfy* – are packed with ideas to make your home cat-friendly. Also, search "cat furniture" or "cat shelves" in Pinterest or Google for tons more ideas.







Cats

are

everywhere!



Just about every city in British Columbia – from Cranbrook to Prince Rupert, Campbell River to Fort St. John – has too many cats. When there are more cats than homes, there is a problem – a cat overpopulation problem.

Kindness to cats begins with telling others about cat overpopulation. Not sure how to start the conversation? Wear the cat ears included in your *Bark!* magazine package to school! Your classmates and teachers are bound to ask why you have them on – the perfect opportunity to let them know that cats need our help.

## Cat grass creatures

Cats love to munch on grass! Try growing your own green treat in a funky, one-of-a-kind recycle creature. Be kind to your cat and the planet at the same time!

### Supplies:

- Recyclables
- Scissors
- Glue
- Tape
- Potting soil
- Cat grass seeds

### Directions:

1. Assemble your creature. Let your imagination run wild! Just make sure the “body” can hold water without leaking. A shallow plastic container with a wide opening works well.



2. Fill the “body” with potting soil. Leave about 2 centimetres of room at the top.

3. Take a small handful of seeds and place them just below the surface of the soil. (Most pet supply stores sell cat grass seeds. Wheat or oat seeds from a health food store will also work.) Be careful not to plant the seeds too deep. They might not sprout!

4. Place your creature in a sunny window. Water the seeds every day until grass shoots begin to appear. Try not to overwater! Just lightly dampen the soil by misting it with a spray bottle.

5. Allow the shoots to grow to a height of about 10 centimetres. Place your creature somewhere your cat can enjoy the tender greens. Yummy!



## Fix before six

Thanks to you and your cat ears, the cat overpopulation message is spreading! But what can be done to solve the problem? Having your cat spayed or neutered is one of the most important kind acts you can do.

Young female cats can get pregnant before six months of age. Many people wait too long to have their cats spayed or neutered, thinking they are still just a kitten. But, before they know it, they have an unwanted litter of kittens on their hands. So remember to “Fix before six.”



*It's Raining Cats and Cats* by Jeanne Prevost

Jim likes kittens, and wonders why his family had their cat, Molly, spayed. But his mother shows him how letting Molly multiply might be more than he bargained for!

*Kittens in the Kitchen* by Lucy Daniels

Follow Mandy and her friend James as they race to find homes for four newborn kittens.



## Toy joy

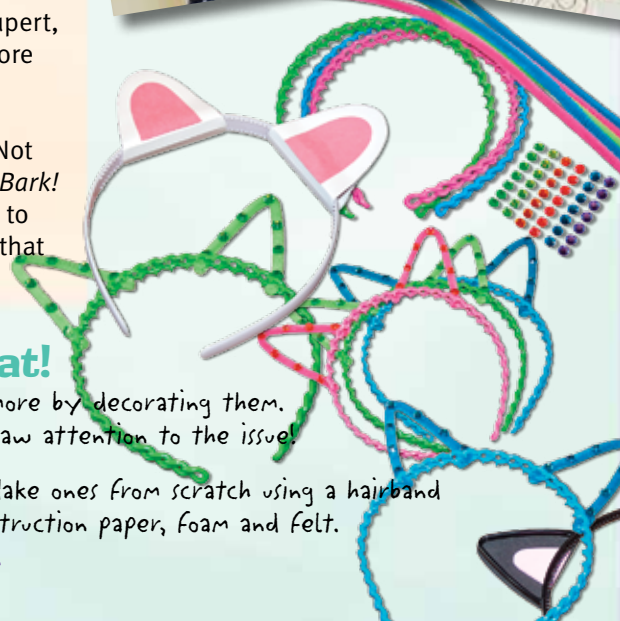
Take time each day to have fun with your cat. Daily playtime also means a chance for him to get some exercise!

Just like us, cats love to play. Toys – like this fleece wand you can make yourself – trigger their natural instinct to stalk and pounce. All you need is a chopstick and some fleece fabric. Cut the fleece into strips. Tie or hot glue the strips to the chopstick. And voilà – an instant irresistible cat toy!

**Playtime hints:** Hold the chopstick and dangle the fleece strips in front of your cat. When he lunges for the toy, pull it away. Then let him lunge again. This game of keep-away can keep your cat entertained for a long time. Just remember to let him “win” occasionally to keep him from becoming frustrated and bored with the game!



Playtime!



## Express your inner cat!

Make your cat ears stand out even more by decorating them. Bright or sparkly ones are sure to draw attention to the issue!

Do your friends want cat ears too? Make ones from scratch using a hairband and materials like pipe cleaners, construction paper, foam and felt. Find instructions at [spca.bc.ca/crafts](http://spca.bc.ca/crafts).







Permanent markers are great because Loki's name and number won't rinse off in the rain!



### ↳ Kind Act #11

When Lucas, 7, and his family decided they were ready for a kitten, they knew to adopt, not shop! They headed straight to the Williams Lake SPCA to pick out a kitten just right for them.

## ID is key

Losing your cat is a scary experience! Be prepared in case she goes missing by making sure she has two forms of identification: a tattoo or microchip and a break-away collar with an ID tag.

Create your own ID tag out of recycled plastic or Shrinky Dinks® sheets, and you can make it as unique and special as your cat!

### What you need:

- ✓ Shrinky Dinks® sheet or clear #6 plastic (look for the #6 recycle symbol on hard plastic such as take-out food containers)
- ✓ Permanent markers
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Single-hole punch
- ✓ Oven
- ✓ Baking sheet
- ✓ Tin foil or parchment paper
- ✓ Oven mitts
- ✓ Key ring
- ✓ Adult to help out!

3. Punch a hole where the top of the tag will be.

4. Decorate your plastic shape with coloured markers. Be sure to write out your cat's name and your family's phone number. Use large lettering so you will still be able to read it once the plastic has shrunk.

5. Put your tag on a piece of tin foil or parchment paper on a baking sheet. Put the baking sheet in the oven.



7. When you see the plastic flatten out, remove the baking sheet from the oven with oven mitts.

8. Once your one-of-a-kind ID tag has cooled, attach it to a key ring and then to your cat's collar!

### What to do:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 350 °F.

2. Cut out a piece of plastic in the shape you would like your cat's ID tag to be. Keep in mind that the plastic will shrink to a third of the size!

6. Watch through the oven door as the plastic curls up and flattens out again. This takes about 2 to 3 minutes.



### ↳ Kind Act #88

Twelve-year-olds Lucy and Goldie-Lynn came up with a great way to help cats in need: cupcakes for cat food! The girls baked the sweet treats and then held a bake sale at school. The price for a cupcake? A can of cat food! They collected 170 cans for the Victoria SPCA.



### ↳ Kind Act #51

Olivia, 11, made a scratch pad for her cat - from scratch! She got the idea from [spca.bc.ca/crafts](http://spca.bc.ca/crafts).