



TOILET TRAINING FOR SENIOR CATS

We now know older cats commonly have arthritis. This can make it harder for them to use litter pans reliably or may result in senior cats kicking litter over the side of litter pans due to poor coordination. Options specifically for senior cats are becoming more widely available for purchase. You can create similar pans by cutting one of the sides shorter on an existing litter pan. You can also transform a storage container into a litter box by cutting an entry door with little to no step for your cat to clear. You can place duct tape around the cut edges so they're not sharp.

Placing wee pads around the low side helps to contain any litter that is kicked or tracked out.



Cats that aren't used to using litter pans, or simply can't step up into one, may need another option. Wee pads designed for housetraining puppies can be a lifesaver. But just how easy is it to actually teach a cat to use them?

According to those who use wee pads in their home, it just requires a little know-how and some patience. Here are some best practices:

To get started, simply place a wee pad inside a clean litter box. Lay the wee pad flat on the bottom or make sure it's big enough to drape over the sides. The cat should urinate on it out of habit.

Training a cat to use a wee pad can also be much like training a cat to use the litter box. Place some of the cat's stool on the wee pad to give him the idea. He'll smell the stool on the wee pad, and he'll be drawn to use it. That said, it may take some time before he's comfortable going on the wee pad.

Others suggest putting a handful of litter in the center of the pad to clue him in. Once he starts using the pad faithfully, less and less litter can be used, until none is needed.

If a cat is currently toileting outside of the litter box, place a pad where ever the cat tends to go. Some even recommend taping them to walls if the cat has a tendency to spray.

Once a wee pad is in its desired location, check on it now and then. A cat may fold or crumple the pad in an



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attempt to bury his business. If the pad is askew when the cat uses it, it may result in the cat's business spreading to the floor. Consequently, consider using wee pads only on a floor that's easy to clean, like tile.

If you're not comfortable with using the wee pad on your floor, there are several options. One idea is to put the wee pad on a cookie sheet. A cat or even kitten should be able to walk over its low sides easily. That way, if a pad is overturned or askew, the mess will still be somewhat contained.

You may also want to consider looking into training pad holders. A holder will

secure the pad in place; its non-slip bottom will ensure that it doesn't slide around when your cat steps on it.

Depending on how many cats you have in your home and how many of your cat use them, you may want to change the pad once or twice a day. Some cats will urinate on one end of the pad, and then on the other end later in the day.

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