Cat Behavior

Living with a jumpy cat

My cat jumps onto counters as if he's Michael Jordan… what can I do?

Cats are curious creatures that like to explore, but counters can be dangerous; for instance, if your cat lands on a hot stove or sharp object. Try to determine why he is jumping up there so that you can keep him safe. Is there food that is enticing him? Are there "play toys" such as pens, paper, etc.? Is he looking out a window? Is he trying to escape from your 2-year-old or the family dog? Keep your counters clear of items that might attract your cat. If there is a window above the counters, draw the curtains. Don't let children or other pets harass your cat. Also, be sure that your cat has plenty of toys to keep him amused so that he doesn't get bored and go looking for entertainment in a place where you'd prefer he didn't go.

You can easily train your cat to not jump on your counters. Try placing double-sided tape on the edge of the counters; cats don't like things sticking to their paws. Or, place a plastic carpet runner upside down on the counter. Your cat won't like getting poked by the little nubs!

You can also try booby trapping your counters by lining up empty soda cans that have coins inside them. Your cat won't like the loud noise they make when he inadvertently knocks them over. There are also several commercial products available to help you remedy this problem.

For additional help controlling your cat's urge to jump, contact your veterinarian—the best resource for information about the health and well-being of your furry friend.