

Does Your Cat Miss the Litter Box?

The number one behavior complaint from cat owners is that their cats miss the litter box or are urinating or defecating in inappropriate places around the house. Understanding why your cat is misbehaving is the key to correcting the problem.

Most often, the cause of this misbehavior is an environmental factor. Here are some of the most common causes:

- Aggression between cats or invasion of your cat's home turf by a roaming cat
- The number of cats that have to share the "same bathroom," i.e., the litter box. One litter pan per kitty is typical.
- Social changes in the household, like new family members, roommates, or new pets
- Location ... location ... location: cats like a nice, quiet, private place to "go."
- Type and amount of litter used. Cats can be fussy, so you may have to experiment with different kinds. And don't be stingy! Make sure you provide enough litter for digging and covering.
- How you clean up the "oops"; it's best to use an enzymatic cleanser specifically designed to neutralize odor. Ammonia-based products may entice your cat to urinate in the same spot again!

[Urinary obstruction](#), when the urethra is blocked and your cat can't pee. This is a medical emergency that requires you to contact your veterinarian immediately. If the cause isn't environmental, it might be medical. There could be a few common medical reasons why your cat is missing the box. They include:

- Urinary tract infection
- Kidney or bladder problems
- [Diabetes](#)
- A host of diseases that cause diarrhea, including inflammatory bowel disease, cancer, and others

How do you control the problem once it starts?

First and foremost, contact your veterinarian if your cat

is having accidents outside the box. They will help you determine the proper next steps. In a multiple-cat household, it can be difficult to determine which cat has the problem. Your veterinarian may be able to suggest some tips on how to identify the culprit.

If the cause is not medical, check out our article, "[Litter Box 101](#)." It will help you ensure that your cat has perfect litterbox manners.

If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian - they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.