



## Kitten Proof Your Home

Kittens are among the most delightful little creatures on the planet. They're tiny and silly and essentially helpless... which is why you, as the "mom" or "dad" of your sweet little bundle of fluff, you must protect them from themselves.

By following a few simple suggestions, you can keep your kitten safe from harm, and your home and belongings safe from kitty-damage.

1. **Learn your household's hideouts.** Kittens are not only curious little beings, but their bodies are fantastically flexible. This means your little one will very likely find and squeeze herself into spots in your home you may not know exist. Cats like small, dark, out-of-the-way places. While your kitty can be easily spotted if she's concealing herself under your bed, you might think you've lost her for real if she finds a cleverer place to hide.

It's a good idea before leaving the house to say good-bye to kitty. You can lay eyes on her and reassure yourself she isn't trapped in a shoebox in your closet or a dresser drawer. As much as possible, limit her access to potentially unsafe hiding spots when you're not at home. And when you're at home and about to run the clothes washer or dryer, check carefully first to ensure kitty isn't in either machine.



2. **Eliminate escape routes to the outdoors.** All the windows and doors in your home should close and latch securely, and screens should fit snugly in their frames. Your kitten may see something outside he wants to investigate, and many a cat has launched himself against a loose screen and made a quick getaway.

Obviously, this goes double if you don't live on the ground floor. During the warmer months of the year, thanks to a phenomenon known as [Feline High Rise Syndrome](#), city dwelling cats routinely fall from open windows and fire escapes, often necessitating a trip to an emergency veterinary clinic.

3. **Put away anything you don't want broken.** Cats are gifted climbers and explorers, but their considerable acrobatic skills can't be counted on to prevent a disaster. If you have fragile collectibles on open shelves in your home, you might want to put them away until kitty is a bit older. Not only could she knock something precious and breakable off a shelf by accident, she might also decide to play swatty-cake with your expensive stemware or the ceramic angel your daughter made for you at summer camp.

**4.If it's dangling, it's a cat toy.** The most potentially hazardous household "danglers" are electrical cords and drawcords on window coverings. You want to prevent your kitten from chewing electrical cords by any means available, and drawcords on drapes, curtains, or blinds can present both a choking and hanging hazard.

You might also want to raise your window coverings well above floor level while your kitten is learning to use his OWN scratching and climbing surfaces.



**5.Remove poisonous plants from your home.** Most kittens and adult cats will sample whatever greenery and flowers come into their domain. You'll want to know the **plants that are poisonous to cats** (there's a long list) and make sure they're not in your home. You may also want to find places for safe plants that kitty can't get to... unless you like the look of partially chewed greenery!

**6.Some toys require adult supervision.** But it's important to keep certain items out of reach when you're not around, as they can be a choking risk if kitty chews or swallows them.

**7.Secure cabinet doors and drawers.** If you've ever had feline housemates, you probably know that some cats have a knack for opening drawers and cabinets to see what's inside. Unless your kitten will be constantly supervised, it's a good idea to install childproof latches to prevent her from breaking and entering into an area where cleaning supplies or other toxic chemicals are stored. If that's not possible, move all those types of products to an area of your home that your cat doesn't have access to.



**8.Keep toilet seats down.** One of the quirkiest behaviors of some cats is a fascination with water (often only water that is NOT in their water bowl). Some cats also develop a strange obsession with toilet bowl water, so to protect your little guy or gal from an unexpected dunking or worse, it's a good idea for everyone in the family to develop the habit of keeping the toilet seat down. This could also be a lifesaver if the water in the bowl happens to contain cleaning chemicals.

**9.Keep all medications out of reach.** All medications in your home should be kept where your kitten can't get to them. If you're in the habit of leaving pill bottles on your kitchen or bathroom counter, it's time to move them to a secure spot. A determined kitten can chew through a plastic bottle. It's also important to immediately pick up any pills accidentally dropped on the floor before kitty finds them.

**10.Give kitty it's own outdoor hangout.** As long as your kitten is immunized against disease, she can go outdoors on a harness and leash, or into her own outdoor enclosure or catio. This will allow your kitten to enjoy the great outdoors (preferably with her paws on the ground as often as possible) in nice weather, which can prevent boredom and enrich her environment in a meaningful way. If you choose not to vaccinate your cat, please keep her inside.