



Cardinal Animal Hospital

www.cardinalanimalhosp.com

2301 Fleming Road

Greensboro, NC 27410

336-668-9475

LITTERBOX TRAINING

Congratulations on your new bundle of fur! Perhaps you are eager to help your kitten become litter box trained and you may also be ready to help prevent or understand unwanted accidents and sprayings. The following information can help with litter box training and also give some insight to problems that may occur with your new kitten regarding his/ her litter box.

The first step in helping your kitten become litter box trained is acquiring the appropriate litter box and litter for your unique kitten. Does your kitten need a covered box or a simple open box, perfumed litter or basic litter? Does your kitten need a lot of depth of litter in the box? Your kitten's first introduction to his/her new box and litter will help reveal what he/she will prefer to use. An idea for determining your kitten's choice is to place two kinds of litter (clay, clumping, recycled paper, pearls, scented, or unscented) next to each other and watch to see which of the two your kitten chooses. The same scenario can be done to determine box type and litter depth, as well. Also keep in mind that one litter box per cat in each household is recommended. This gives each cat his/her own sense of territory and helps him/her have needed privacy. As for cleaning the litter box, it should be scooped daily and replaced weekly along with a complete cleaning of the litter box.

The next step in litter box training is finding the most appropriate place for the box. Cats seemingly prefer privacy, so placing the litter box in a somewhat private area can be helpful. However, make sure the litter box is in a pleasant area for the kitten and not in a frightening place such as next to a furnace. Also, remember not to place the litter box in proximity to the kitten's food and/or water for sanitary reasons.

Marking or Medical?

After determining your kitten's preferences regarding his/her litter box, litter and special area it is possible that your kitten may begin to eliminate in unwanted areas. The first approach in determining why this is occurring is to rule out and medical problems that may exist. Diseases or problems that affect feline elimination are kidney disease, diabetes, bladder disease, arthritis, hormonal disturbances, and nervous system diseases. If your kitten or cat is eliminating in unwanted areas after being litter box trained, or frequently eliminating contact Cardinal Animal Hospital for a thorough exam.

After ruling out any medical reasons for your cat's soiling in the house, the next consideration is possible markings. A few reasons for marking include the introduction of new animals or people to the household, moving to a new home, new odors, (possibly from carpet, furniture, air fresheners, etc.), or other cats coming to close to the house. Since felines can be territorial, a common response to any new inhabitant within the home or another animal outside would cause the cat to mark inside the house to redefine his/her territory.

Possible Solutions to Marking

Neutering or spaying is an option to consider for the prevention of marking. About 90% of neutered male cats do not continue to spray following their neutering procedure. As for other animals venturing too close to the house outside, it can be practical to keep your cat away from the area where it sees or hears the other animals. This can be accomplished by keeping the windows covered or stacking empty soda cans (or other noise makers) in that area to prevent the cat from attempting to look out the window. If the marking can be attributed to new people or pets being introduced to the household then contact Cardinal Animal Hospital for advice on behavior, or for a recommendation of an animal behavioral consultant. Most importantly, do NOT in anyway physically harm your kitten or cat when the markings occur (i.e. rubbing his/her nose in the mess, or swatting at his/her nose or body). Finally, reevaluate the location and style of the litter box, the litter, and the depth and cleaning schedule of the litter for possible solutions to unwanted markings.

We hope this information on kitten behavior will be helpful. Our professionals here will continue striving to provide outstanding care for you and your pet. Thank you for your business and please contact us if you have any further questions or concerns. Cardinal Animal Hospital