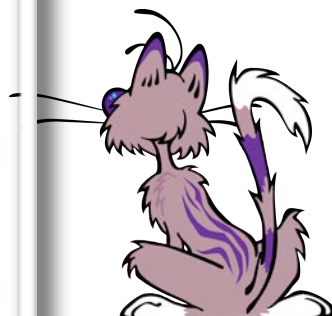


Is it okay to keep a cat indoors all the time?



Keeping cats exclusively indoors has, of recent years, become more popular in Ireland. For many city-dweller cats in Europe this has been the norm for many years. Sometimes people make this decision due to fears of exposing their cats to significant outdoor dangers. Traditionally cats have been given freedom to explore outdoors unsupervised. The following are a few of the ways you can keep your cat safer in the 'great outdoors'.

- * Don't allow her out after dark.
- * Don't feed her outdoors as this will attract other cats and rodents.
- * Apply a monthly 'spot on' for flea/mite control and make sure to worm routinely.
- * Fit her with a safety release collar to reduce the danger of her getting entangled in branches, hedges etc.
- * Supply a bell on the collar to inhibit hunting. (it should be noted that rat urine can pose a human health risk)
- * Neuter early to reduce the risk of fighting with other cats. The dangers she is exposed to when fighting include cat bite abscesses and transmission of Feline AIDS.
- * Fit your cat with an id tag. Microchipping is also strongly recommended as cats frequently lose their collars.



If you have made a decision to keep her exclusively indoors, make sure you provide plenty of stimulation and interaction. Having two indoor cats can work well as they will interact with each other. There are great activity centres available for cats now, but don't forget, you need to get involved in the play as well. Make sure to keep vaccination going, as you will need to keep your cat fully immune to these dangerous diseases which she may be exposed to during the rare trips outside the house, such as when she needs veterinary treatment or has to stay in a cattery.

