



Step by Step Help for Inappropriate Elimination in Cats

(AKA Why is my cat peeing there and how can I stop the behavior?)

1. Is your cat peeing or pooping (or both) outside the box?
 - a. This helps determine if the cat is having an issue with the litter box or pain during urination or defecations
 - b. Cats that have a problem with the litter box (not clean enough, in a stressful location, another cat has claimed the box, new litter they don't like) will pee and poop outside the box
 - c. Cats that have pain or discomfort from peeing (infection or cystitis) or pooping (stress diarrhea, constipation, arthritis) will still use the litter box for one elimination but not the other
 - d. Once you answer this main question, we can work on determining if there is something physically wrong

2. Do you have enough litter boxes and are they clean enough?
 - a. The rule is 1 more box than the number of cats you have
 - b. Example: you need at least 5 boxes for 4 cat households
 - c. Litter boxes should be spaced throughout the house not all in one room
 - d. Are they being cleaned frequently enough
 - i. Scoop at least once daily & fully clean boxes and change litter at least every other week
 - ii. Would you use a toilet that had not been flushed all day?

3. Are your litter boxes big enough for all your cats?
 - a. Traditional litter boxes are too small for most cats
 - b. The litter box should be at least 1.5 times the length of your cat
 - c. We recommend making your own litter boxes
 - i. Under the bed storage boxes
 - ii. Cutting holes in large Rubbermaid totes
 - iii. <http://petprojectblog.com/archives/cats/make-your-own-cat-litter-box/>

4. Have there been any major changes in your house

- a. New pet (cat or dog)?
 - i. New dogs or puppies can cause cats to avoid litter boxes
 - ii. Make sure litter boxes are kept in an area that dogs cannot get to
 - iii. If you have added a cat, you should have added at least one litterbox
 - b. New people in the house or someone recently left?
 - i. Cats can become stressed by change and stress often leads to changes in litter box habits
 - ii. If there has been a change, we strongly recommend using Feliway diffusers
5. Has your cat been recently examined by your regular veterinarian?
- a. Cats with urination issues can have an underlying medical cause
 - i. Kidney issues
 - ii. Thyroid issues
 - iii. Diabetes
 - iv. Urinary infection (not common in cats but can occur)
 - b. Cats pooping outside the box can have underlying medical issues
 - i. Constipation from kidney issues
 - ii. Diarrhea from stress colitis
 - iii. Arthritis making it difficult for the cat to get to and use the litter box without pain
 - c. Your veterinarian can examine and test for these conditions
 - d. If there is not underlying medical cause, they can prescribe medicine for stress
6. Links for tips and tricks to retrain your cat to their litterbox

Veterinary Partner has great tips

<http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=612>

<http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&C=&A=633&SourceID=>

Veterinary Cat Specialists Website for owners

<https://catfriendly.com/why-does-my-cat/not-use-the-litter-box/>