

# Cat 101

## The Inside Story on the Outside Cat

**Cats can live wonderful lives indoors. Keep your kitty safe, healthy, and happy at home.**

If your cat is begging to go outside, redirect his attention to safe, indoor activities instead. The lifespan of a cat is cut in half when allowed to roam outside. Cats live a wonderful “cat life” indoors, provided they are given enough love and attention, toys, scratching posts, and interactive toys. To provide some “outdoor” experience while staying inside, you can get cat grass, put up window perches, and use wand toys to simulate hunting behavior.

**Here are some of the dangers an outside cat faces once the door shuts behind him.**

### Diseases from other cats

There are several diseases that can be easily passed from cat to cat, and vaccinations may not be 100% effective. Feline leukemia and feline immunodeficiency virus are just two of the many potentially deadly diseases of cats are at risk for.

### Parasites

Outdoor cats are more likely to suffer from fleas, ticks, ear mites, and worms. These are not only unpleasant for you and your cat, but they can be costly to treat and cause severe problems if left untreated.

### Poisoning

Cats can easily ingest deadly chemicals such as lawn fertilizers, rat poison, antifreeze, motor oil, poisonous plants, and rancid food.

### Cruel people

Outside pets are at the mercy of the people they encounter, including well-meaning children, and can sometimes be the victims of cruel or abusive treatment.

### Traffic

Cats are not “streetwise” about cars. Many outside cats die prematurely from car accidents because they are no match for fast-moving vehicles, even in “quiet neighborhoods.”

### Other animals

Fights with other cats, dogs, and wildlife often leave cats maimed or injured. Typically, the longer an injury goes untreated, the more difficult and expensive it is to treat.

### Being a neighborhood nuisance

To an outside cat, the whole world is his litter box. Your neighbors probably don't appreciate the smell of cat urine and excrement in their yard, nor the possible health hazards.

### Pet overpopulation

Cats that have not been spayed or neutered and that are allowed to roam and mate account for millions of cats euthanized each year. Three to four million cats are euthanized each year at animal shelters across the United States.

*The bottom line*

**Inside cats have a much better chance of living long, happy, and safe lives. So for the safety of your cat and community harmony, keep him indoors!**