

How to deter feral and stray cats from your property

There are several easy environmentally safe solutions that will help to keep cats out of your gardens, flower beds, and away from your house:

- **Wash outside doors or walls.** Get rid of the cat urine spray or the cats will return to refresh the scent. Vinegar, baking soda or cornstarch are good options. Avoid bleach.
- **Clean up.** Clutter provides homes to rodents which will attract stray cats to your property.
- **Make digging difficult.** Cats love soft soil to dig for a litter spot, so make it unattractive. Before you plant, line flower beds with chicken wire the vegetation will grow through the wire and will prevent cats from digging.
- **Use mulch that's uncomfortable.** Prickly cuttings from holly, rose clippings, pine cones, or other uncomfortable material helps to deter cats. It's also environmentally friendly.
- **Avoid attractive plants.** Cats love mint, and may be attracted to some types of honeysuckle. Instead, plant vegetation like rue, lavender, pennyroyal, Coleus canina, and lemon thyme throughout the garden.
- **Use scents that are repulsive to cats.** Cats have a strong sense of smell; you can make your own natural cat repellent. Rub a sliced onion around fence posts or deck chairs. Place used coffee grounds in your flower beds or garden that will keep most critters out.
- **Tip for keeping cats off of cars.** Office supply stores carry floor mats/chair mats designed for carpets that have a textured underside with little rubber nubs. Place these mats upside down on the hood, trunk, or roof of your car. Cats don't like the spiky feel of these mats and will avoid walking or resting on their surface.
- **Avoid feeding stray or feral cats.**
- **Keep garbage in a secured container** to ensure that it does not provide a food source for feral cats.