

So You're Thinking of Declawing Your Cat

Why do people declaw their cats?

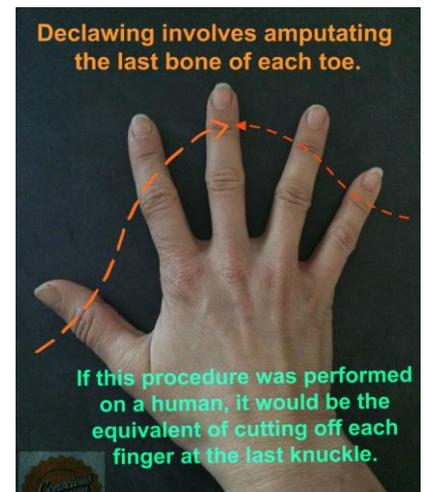
- They scratch furniture/inappropriate items in your home
- They scratch you and it hurts!

Why do cats scratch anyway?

- To mark their territory by leaving a visual mark and a scent
- To reduce stress
 - the more things that smell like them, the more comfortable they feel
- To stretch their bodies and flex their feet/claws
- To remove the dead outer layer of their claws
 - trim their nails
- To burn off energy
- To defend themselves when they feel threatened

What is declawing? Just a permanent nail trim, right?

The nail grows in the last bone in a cat's toe. Declawing, or onychectomy, is a painful surgical procedure that amputates each of the cat's toes at the last knuckle joint. If any part of the bone is left behind, the nail can re-grow and cause chronic pain and infection in that toe.



Will my cat act differently once declawed?

Your cat's feet will be very sore after this type of surgery, which could make them more irritable until they have fully healed. Cats that no longer have their claws no longer have their first line of defense for when they feel threatened, so some will resort to biting people instead of swatting at them.

Some cats will start having litter box issues, because most types of litter are too rough on their now sensitive feet. Finding a very soft litter is recommended for declawed cats.

WAIT! There are other options you can try first!

Cats were born with claws for a reason, and once they're gone they are gone. Before going through with a procedure that cannot be undone, we recommend you try these alternatives first.

Catify your home

- Scratching posts in areas where your cat likes to scratch, such as near doorways, windows, and next to furniture
 - Posts should be tall enough that your cat can fully stretch their back and legs while they scratch
- Rub catnip on scratching posts to encourage scratching of appropriate items
- Prevent outside cats from coming near your home
 - Block your cat's access to certain doors/windows where they can see outside cats, as this may encourage them to scratch around those areas



Management

- Trim your cat's nails often
- Double sided tape to deter scratching certain objects
- Furniture guard to protect furniture until cat is trained
- Use soft paws if necessary (pictured right)



Training

- Teach your cat to allow their nails to be trimmed
- Teach your cat where to scratch
 - Contact the Mountain Humane Behavior Department for training tips!

If you've tried all of these options and are still not seeing the changes you want, call our behavior department for a free consultation!

Did you know?

Declawing cats is already banned in the following countries and US cities:

Countries: England, Scotland, Wales, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia, Portugal, Belgium, Spain, Brazil, Australia, and New Zealand

Cities: Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Monica, Berkeley, Culver City, Burbank, and Denver

Declawing cats was most recently banned in the state of New York!

Contact the MH Behavior Department via email at behavior@mountainhumane.org
or by phone at (208) 788-4351 x114