



## CAT SCRATCHERS

Most of us have purchased scratching posts for our cats hoping to save furniture and carpet from cat paws. Scratchers can be costly, so it's frustrating to buy one only to have it sit unused. There are some important factors to consider when teaching your cat to use a scratching post. These might not be the answer in all situations, but these factors come into play in the vast majority of cases:

### TEXTURE

Is the material covering the scratcher comparable to what your cat is currently scratching? Some scratchers are attractive to look at for humans; however the material isn't attractive to cats. Observe the material your cat is scratching and be sure the scratcher you buy has a similar texture.

### HEIGHT

Is the scratcher long or high enough for your cat to stretch out and scratch comfortably? If the scratcher is too short, your cat will have a difficult time using it, and cats don't like it to be uncomfortable.

### HORIZONTAL OR VERTICAL

Some cats are horizontal scratchers, meaning they tend to stretch out front to scratch versus standing up. Some cats are vertical scratchers, meaning they would rather stand up tall as if it were a tree. Observe your cat's scratching style and keep it in mind when shopping for a scratcher.

### STURDINESS

Does the scratcher wobble when your cat puts weight on it? Is the post coming loose from the base of the scratcher? Cats like to feel secure when scratching, knowing the surface will be steady to support them. If the scratcher isn't sturdy, your cat is going to look for other options, like your furniture.

### LOCATION

Have you put the scratcher in a corner of the house because it doesn't fit in with the decor? Cats are all about convenience. Put the scratcher in an area that your cat spends most of its time. Once your cat has the habit of scratching the appropriate post, you can slowly move it to your preferred spot.

### ATTRACTION

Attract your cat to the post using catnip or treats. Sprinkle the catnip or treats on the base and into the fabric. Also, you can hang bags of catnip from the top. Try spending time near the post encouraging your cat to interact with it. Playing with the cat near the post is a good way to get your cat interested.



### REWARD

The most important step is to reward the cat every time they use the post. Have yummy food treats nearby and give one to the cat whenever you see them scratching the post.