



Fun Fall & Winter Activities For Your Cat

By Tiffany Lutnick, Cat Program Supervisor

Although some cats are more active than others, every cat needs some play-type stimulation in their life to keep them happy and healthy. As Fall and Winter approach and the days get longer, we tend to stay inside more and be more sedentary. Our cats echo this behavior to a degree, but they still need the mental stimulation of playtime. Here are some ideas for fun activities that will help keep your cat happy during those dreary winter days:

- Buy a video or DVD for your cat: Since birds aren't as numerous or as active in the fall and winter, give your cat an alternative by watching a "kitty sitter" video. These videos have mice, birds or other small animals scurrying about that your cat can watch. Some cats love these and will even bat at the TV screen.
- Grow wheatgrass or catnip in a pot indoors: Many cats love the scent of fresh catnip and also eat wheatgrass to aid in their digestion. Both of these are easy to grow inside so your cat can enjoy them year-round. Seeds are easy to find for wheatgrass and catnip, or if you start in the spring, you can purchase small plants of catnip from a nursery and wheatgrass at your local health food store. Give your kitties a treat!
- Try a heated cat bed: Many cats appreciate warm, cozy spots to curl up in as weather gets colder. Heated cat beds are available and many cats love them – especially seniors.
- Simulate hunting with interactive toys: Give your cats a chance to get some playtime while the outside is quieter and less active. Interactive toys, also called fishing pole-type toys, are a great way to provide your kitty with the thrill of the hunt while keeping them safe indoors. Interactive toys simulate hunting and stalking that really give your cats a workout and the mental stimulation they crave. 'Da Bird' is a great toy with a special feather attachment that mimics the movements and sound of a bird in flight. Cat charmers are also a great toy that simulates a snake or other wiggly prey. Don't forget to let your cat catch the toy occasionally too – they need to experience the rewards of the hunt to feel satisfied for their efforts and continue wanting to play.