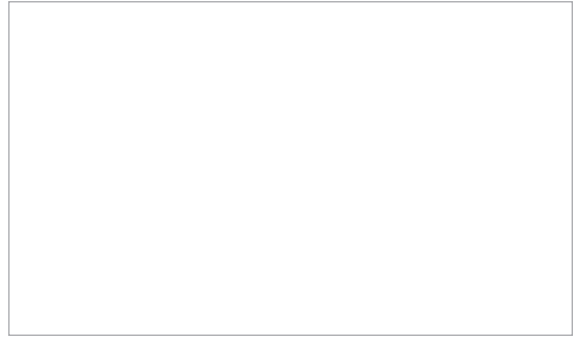


## What your cat needs: multi-cat households

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### What your cat needs: multi-cat households

Many owners have more than one cat at home. Cats that are related, or that have been together since kittenhood, are more likely to get on than cats that have been introduced as adults. There are several things you can do to make it easier for your cats to live in harmony.

#### Space

- Make sure that there is sufficient space for your cats both horizontally and vertically.
- Cats like to climb and spend a lot of their time off the floor on raised surfaces, such as shelves placed at different heights, window sills, cat activity centres or even the tops of wardrobes and cupboards if they can be reached easily.

#### Food, water and litter trays (boxes)

- Plenty of resources should be available to all cats (litter trays, food and water stations, sleep, resting and hiding places, and scratching posts and surfaces).
- These resources should be distributed in a number of different places to prevent cats from controlling one area and causing confrontation or fights with other cats.
- There should be easy access to and from these resources.
- If your cats are kept indoors, there should be one litter tray per cat, plus one extra.
- Make sure the trays are kept clean and free from odours by scooping out soiled litter once or twice a day.
- Clean the trays and replace litter as often as if necessary to keep them clean and odour-free.
- Place the trays in quiet but easily accessible areas; avoid busy areas or very remote locations.
- In multi-level houses, make sure that there is a litter tray and feeding station on each floor.

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## What your cat needs: multi-cat households

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### **Hiding places**

- Being able to hide helps cats cope with challenges, changes and stress in their environment.
- Hiding places can be boxes, crates, baskets, wardrobes or cupboards with the door left open.
- A comfortable hiding place can also serve as a resting or sleeping area, especially if it is raised off the floor and is a good look-out (vantage) point.
- Each resting or hiding place should be big enough for just one, or in some cases two (in the case of related) cats.

### **Increasing social harmony**

- More assertive cats should be fitted with a quick-release collar with bells to alert other cats to their presence.
- Avoid the use of catnip if it makes one cat very aroused or aggressive toward other cats.
- If you are going to introduce another cat into the home, follow a recommended protocol.
- Consider the use of a pheromone product to reduce overall tension.