



# The Inside Story on the Outside Cat



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**Cats can live wonderful lives indoors. Keep your kitty safe, healthy and happy at home.**

If your cat is pleading with you to go outside, redirect his attention to safe, indoor activities instead. The life span of a cat is cut in half when allowed to roam outside. Cats live a wonderful "cat life" indoors, provided they are given enough love and attention, toys, scratching posts, and other amusements.

## Real-world dangers

Here are some of the dangers an outside cat faces once the door shuts behind him:

**Diseases from other cats.** There are several diseases that can be easily passed from cat to cat, and vaccinations may not be 100% effective. Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency virus (Feline AIDS) are just two of the many potentially deadly diseases cats are at risk for.

**Parasites.** Outdoor cats are more likely to suffer from fleas, ticks, ear mites and worms. These are not only unpleasant for you and the cat, they can be costly to treat and cause severe problems if left untreated.

**Poisoning.** Cats can easily ingest deadly chemicals such as lawn fertilizers, rat poison, antifreeze, motor oil, even poisonous plants and rancid food.

**Cruel people.** Outside pets are at the mercy of the people they encounter (including well-meaning children), and can sometimes be the victims of cruel or abusive treatment.

**Traffic.** Cats are not "streetwise" about

cars. Most outside cats die prematurely from car accidents, as they are no match for fast-moving vehicles, even in "quiet neighborhoods."

**Other animals.** Fights with other cats, dogs and wildlife often leave cats maimed or injured. Typically, the longer an injury goes untreated, the more difficult and expensive it is to treat.

**Being a neighborhood nuisance.** To an outside cat, the whole world is his litter box. Your neighbors probably don't appreciate the smell of cat urine and excrement in their yard, nor the possible health hazards.

**Pet overpopulation.** Cats that have not been spayed or neutered and that are allowed to roam and mate account for the millions of cats euthanized each year. Three to four million cats are euthanized each year at animal shelters across the United States. Clearly there are not enough homes for all of them, and allowing unaltered cats to roam outside contributes to the problem.

## The bottom line

Inside cats have a much better chance of living long, happy and safe lives. So if you care about your cat and your community, keep him indoors! 🐾

