

Keeping your cats safely confined to your property



More information and videos showing how to build these options are available at:

<https://www.awlqld.com.au/pet-owner-help/cat-behaviour-and-care/#escape>

Don't have the ability or resources to build something or need advice?

We may be able to help you.

Contact

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There are many benefits to keeping your cat safely contained on your property:

- Won't be injured or killed on roads
- Won't get lost or impounded by Council
- Safer for native wildlife
- Won't dig or soil in neighbours' yards

1 DESEX YOUR CAT

Ensure your cat is desexed. Desexing reduces a cat's desire to roam, fight and mark their territory. It also has the added benefit of preventing unwanted litters of kittens.

2 INDOORS ALL THE TIME

Many cats can be happy staying indoors day and night. You can help train your cat to stay indoors by:

- Keeping doors and windows or screens closed. Ensure everyone in the household (including visitors) is aware that the cat needs to be kept indoors.
- Providing company, playtime, enrichment toys, scratching posts, choices of cosy places to sleep, sunlight, and places to sit up high and look out during the day.
- Regularly cleaning litter trays (preferably 2 per cat). Having a clean place to toilet will reduce stress for your cat, and their desire to return outdoors to toilet in inappropriate places, like your neighbour's garden. If cleaning litter trays is a concern, some automated cleaning options are available - see reviews on YouTube.
- While keeping cats contained indoors all the time is safer for your cat, confinement at night is essential. Night-time is the most dangerous time for cats as they roam further and are more likely to fight with other cats, be attacked by dogs, and injured or killed by cars. Help keep your cat safe at night by using strategic feeding to keep them indoors from dusk to dawn:
 - Feed one-third of their daily food in the morning, one-third at dusk, and the last third when you go to bed. Close windows, screens and doors before the dusk meal is fed to prevent your cat from leaving the house after it has eaten. This is a great time to bond with your cat providing lap-time and company.



However some cats can be difficult to keep indoors!

If keeping your cats inside full-time is just too hard, there are plenty of ways to keep them safe and happy, as follows:

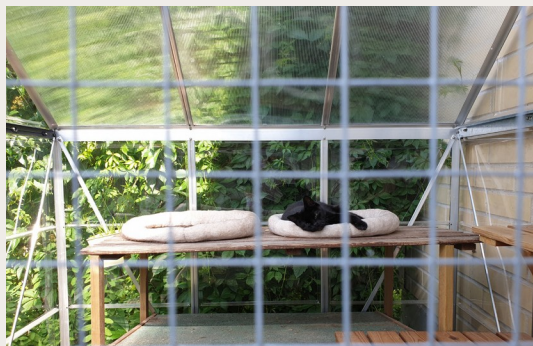
3 ENCLOSING A DECK OR BALCONY**

Add mesh or netting to enclose your deck or balcony so your cat can remain safe and still enjoy the fresh air.



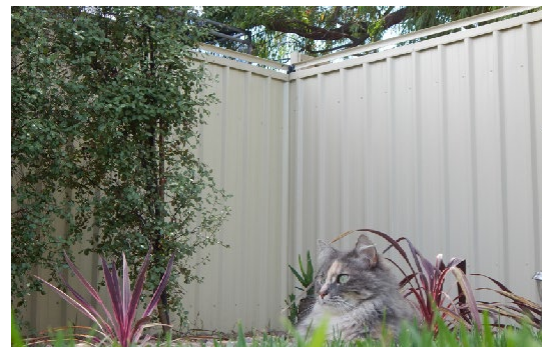
4 OUTDOOR ENCLOSURES**

You can build outdoor enclosures with access to the house, so cats can come and go as they like. These enclosures can be simple, as long as they are attractive to cats, with perhaps a sunny warm place for winter, some cool shady plants for summer, shelves to climb and places to explore and play.



5 FENCE ATTACHMENTS** **

You can install fence attachments to give your cat access to part, or all, of your yard and stop your cat leaping over the fence. There are many types of fencing attachments available. These can be low-cost home-made options, or commercially-available cat fence rollers or netting.



6 INVISIBLE FENCE SYSTEM** ***

If your cat is desperate to wander and you have tried other containment options without success, electronic boundary fencing (also called invisible or hidden fencing) may be an option, especially if you have serious concerns e.g. your cat is deaf, you live close to a busy road. Use reputable installers (rather than DIY) to assist in training your pet. Your cat wears a special collar, which signals to your cat with an audible noise first, then delivers a safe electrical stimulation if it goes closer to a wire placed around your property. Flags are used as a visible warning to assist your cat in learning where the fence is. Hidden fencing can also be used indoors to keep cats from escaping through doors and/or windows.

Electronic boundary fence systems are endorsed by most USA welfare agencies, but not by some Australian welfare agencies because of concerns over the welfare impact. A recent UK study found that long-term exposure to an electronic containment system with clear pre-warning was not associated with reduced cat welfare.

7 WALK ON A LEAD AND HARNESS

Some cats can be trained to walk on a lead and harness. It takes time and gradual short training sessions, first indoors until the cat gets used to it, then in the yard, and finally in the wider community as long as the cat feels safe. It is easiest if training starts when a kitten, but it can be done.

** These options are provided as ideas only. Please use at your discretion. We cannot accept responsibility for the effectiveness of these examples as each cat and situation will be different.*

*** Renters, please consult with your landlord before installing any of the fencing/enclosures above.*

**** Please check laws in your state to ensure these are legal*

