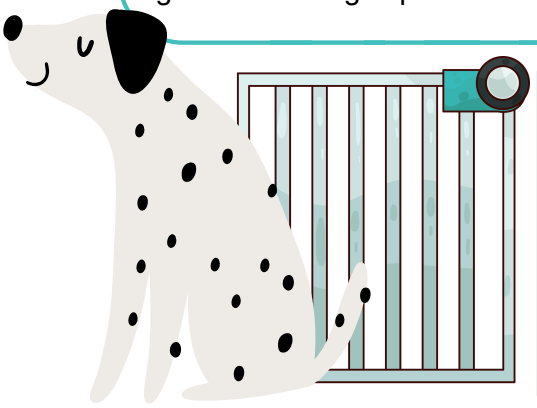
animal rescue league NH

When your cat starts "thinking outside the box"

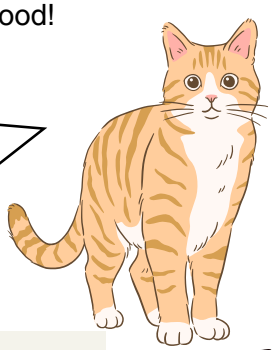
Have you followed all the advice in **Help your cat think "inside the box"** and your cat is still having litter box issues? We are sorry to hear that! Hopefully, this Q&A can help. For the most part, cats want to keep things clean, so considering what your cat thinks about their litter box setup and location can help you plan the next steps. Using **litter box attractant** is also good!

1 Are there dogs in the home?

Cats like use the box in private and dogs can be curious so they do not always give cats enough space for comfort



It is also best they cannot access the box because some dogs will eat from the box



TIPS

1. choose a room for the box dogs cannot go
2. use a **baby gate** to give your cat privacy
3. install a cat door (door with cat-sized hole that allows cats to access spaces dogs cannot); they are not ideal, but some cats will use them (they must never be blocked)



2 Other cats in the home?

Some cats will guard a box if they:

- feel they own that room/box
- want a clean box to themselves
- like to pee in one box/poop in another
- have a health issue (call your vet if you suspect a UTI or you have a male cat guarding, straining in the box and peeing a lot in small amounts)

Signs of guarding

- sitting by a box
- getting in another's face while they are in a box
- stalking, pouncing or fighting



TIPS



1. **clean boxes often** (some cats want a clean one every time)
2. **follow the** "golden rule" to give one+ boxes for each cat (so 3 boxes for 2, 5 for 3, 6 for 4, etc.)
3. add more boxes, including to rooms soiling occurs (cats can only guard one box at a time)
4. move boxes away from any furniture/items a cat can use to perch, guard, hide or pounce
5. use uncovered boxes for easy escape: covered boxes have only one exit, uncovered have many (helps with bravery)



3 Can small children access your cat's litter box?

Cats like to use the litter box alone and children tend to get close up with animals because they love them

Even if a cat shows signals they want to be alone, small children cannot see how the cat feels or what they want



TIPS

1. choose a place for the box children cannot go
2. use a **baby gate** to give your cat a place to potty in private
3. try a **cat door** (a door with a small hole that is cat-sized), even if not ideal, some cats will access a cat door (if using one, never allow it to be blocked)

4 Are there spots your cat has repeated accidents?

Odors attract cats so deep cleaning spots where repeat soiling is occurs is important



Use enzyme cleaner!

- urine-destroying element
- helps remove odor
- helps deter accidents

TIPS

1. keep space **clean of debris** (like dirty laundry or clutter)
2. place a **litter box there**
3. **add a box** (or 2) to room
4. use furniture to **block area**







5 Have you taken all our suggestions without success?

Consider stress or health issues

signs of stress and health issues look the same so talk with your vet about any concerns!



TIPS

1. try pheromone plug ins or spray, like Feliway
2. **use litter box attractant**
3. get advice from your vet!

signs of stress or health issues

- hiding
- not eating/drinking
- fighting with other animals
- lots of rapid tail swaying and circling
- biting or scratching
- going outside the box

IMPORTANT!

Contact your vet if your cat is:

- crouching by the box/guarding
- frequently trying to pee with none/a small amount coming out (with tiny pee spots in box)
- pink or dark urine
- major behavioral changes (like a social cat hiding all the time)



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