

Understanding cat behaviour

By nature cats are predators, they need to hunt for food to survive. Humans go the supermarket and cats look around their environment. Cats also roam to provide themselves with mental and physical exercise. Unfortunately, your neighbours may not appreciate your cat coming on to their property.

When cats roam, they often urinate and defecate on lawns and gardens and may even cause damage to cars by jumping on and off them.

Many communities have un-owned (stray) cats living in drains and colonies. People feeding these cats are only contributing to the problem of unwanted cats and kittens. That may feel they are looking after the animals by feeding them, however the cats will continue to breed and the problem will soon become far beyond control.

Responsible cat ownership

What is it ?

Cat owners have a responsibility to their cat and the community to ensure their cat is housed, managed and kept responsibly.

Before you let your feline friend outside you need to ask yourself...

Is it fair to let my cat out to wander in other peoples properties ? Would I allow a dog the same freedom? How would I feel if the neighbours cat came over to my place and did the same thing?

Cat owners can give their cat the best of both worlds by providing a safe outdoor enclosure. This allows the cat to experience the outdoors in a controlled environment. Enclosures can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. The ideal cat enclosure will contain space for the cat to run around, with climbing options and plenty of shade and resting spots.

There are many companies who manufacture cat enclosures or you may pick up a second-hand aviary or similar which can easily be converted to a cat enclosure. Online auction sites often have cat enclosures and aviaries for sale at a reasonable cost.

Tips for happy cats

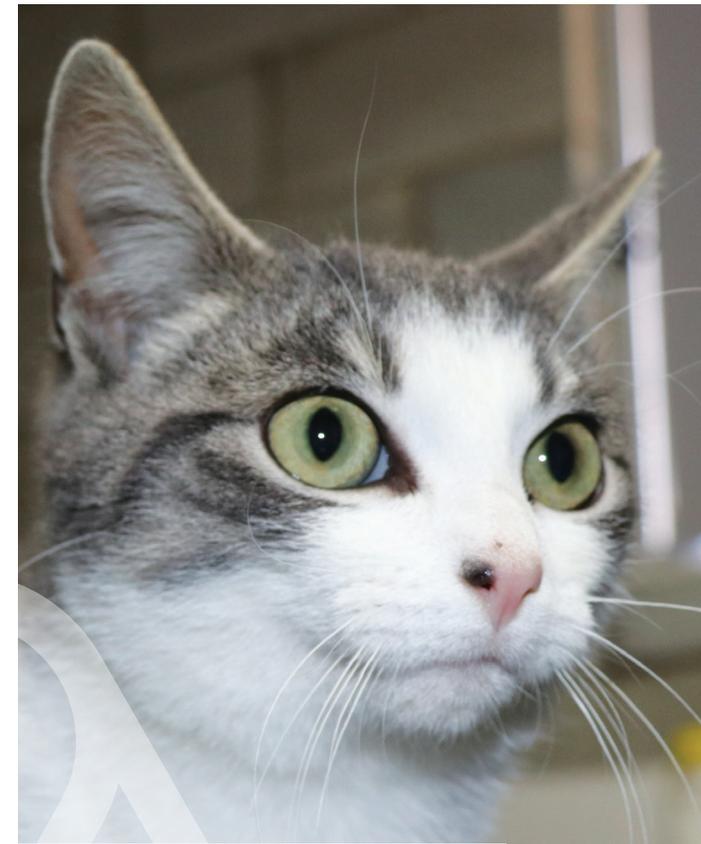
- Keep your cat inside as a kitten, and it will have less desire to venture outdoors
- Provide a safe outside enclosure for the cat, like a screened porch or 'cattery'
- Provide sufficient food and water
- Place shelves next to windows so the cat can see the outdoors from the safety of indoors.
- Play with your cat each day, they love and need human companionship
- Provide plenty of places where your cat can scratch, like a scratching post.
- Make sure your cat has some comfy places to lounge
- Give your cat lots of interesting toys to play with when you are away from home.
- Clean litter boxes regularly.
- Desex your kitten as soon as possible
- Microchip your kitten – it's their ticket home.
- Register your cat once it reaches the appropriate age. (6 months)

Contact us

Rangers: Civic Administration Building
135 Rusden St, Armidale
ph: 1300 136 833 **fax:** (02) 67729275
email: council@armidale.nsw.gov.au

Companion Animal Shelter
29 Saumarez Rd Armidale
ph: (02) 67715498
email: animalshelter@armidale.nsw.gov.au

ARMIDALE
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Responsible Cat Ownership

www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au



Did you know that microchipping, registration and an identity tag are requirements for both dog and cat owners under the Companion Animals Act?

Microchips & tags

Remember, microchipping is a great way to identify your dog or cat, but you can only be reunited with a missing pet if your details are up to date. If you move house or change your telephone number, please call or visit Council or the Animal Shelter as soon as possible to let them know.

Lifetime Registration Fees in NSW

As of 01 July 2019

Non desexed Companion Animal	\$210
Desexed Companion Animal*	\$58
Desexed animal owned by pensioner*	\$25
Desexed animal from Pound/Shelter	\$29
Breeder*	\$58
Working dogs*	Nil
Assistance Animals *	Nil

For any of the above marked * appropriate proof will be required (such as desexing certificate, pension card)

Useful links

Division of Local Government: Cats & Dogs

<https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-and-cats>

Division of Local Government: Responsible Pets Program

<https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-and-cats/responsible-pet-ownership-program>

Housing / Management of cats

Traditionally, cats have roamed the neighbourhood making themselves at home with everyone. Cat owners are now realizing the benefits keeping their cat indoors or a cat enclosure.

Benefits of cats indoors / in an enclosure are:

Dogs: many cats are killed or seriously injured from attacks by dogs

Cars: Cats do not have road sense. Many cross the road successfully, but one day their luck may run out.

People: sadly not everyone loves cats and some seem to get pleasure out of being cruel and hurting or killing cats.

Wildlife: prevent your cat from hunting native wildlife. Hunting is a normal behavior for them.

Better health for your cat: indoor or contained cats don't get into cat fights.

Found a cat?

There is no law prohibiting cats from roaming. Cat owners need to be aware that if their cat roams onto private property, the owner of the property may not be happy.

Stray Cats

If you have a stray cat around your home or work place, you should complete a thorough door knock of the area to ascertain if it is actually a stray, or if someone in the area owns it.

After completing a door knock, and an owner is unable to be found, the stray can be taken to the animal shelter. You will be required to sign a surrender form which shows you have made all reasonable attempts to find the owner.

What if I would like to adopt the cat?

If you would like to adopt a cat go to the Animal Shelter and register your interest after the withholding period. If you are suitable, you will be expected to go through their normal adoption criteria for transfer of ownership (if the owner is not found) Maintain contact with the animal shelter, as this enables you to check the cats progress, and reassure the shelter of your commitment.

Why can't I keep the cat at my home?

Quite often people take in stray cats without contacting the appropriate authorities. It is a legal requirement for you to do this. The description of the cat you leave with the Shelter may not match up to that of the owner, possibly leading to misunderstandings and preventing the distraught owner from reuniting with their pet

The cat may have a microchip, which will not be scanned unless it goes to the Animal Shelter or vet.

A major disadvantage of keeping the cat yourself is that it is very easy to become attached to it. Handing the cat back to the owner can become traumatic.

If the owner reclaims the cat through the shelter, this will also enable the shelter to discuss responsibilities of pet ownership.

Contented cats are happy at home, Keep them there and don't let them roam.