

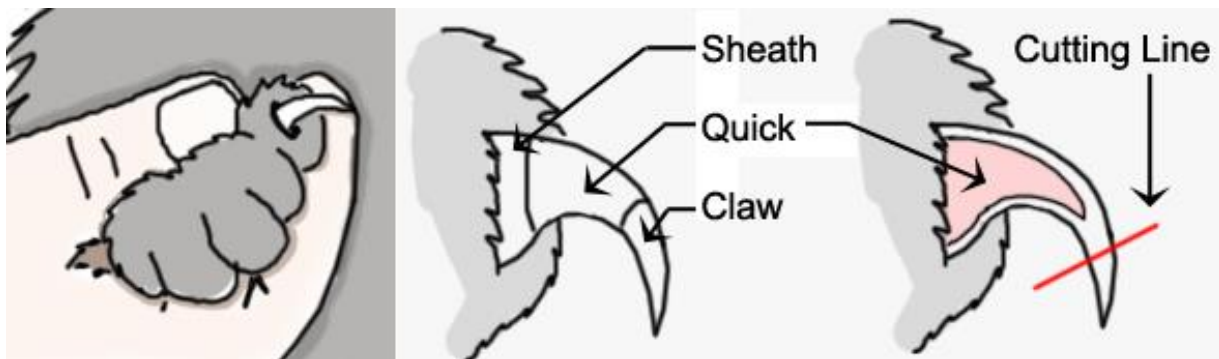
Preventing Furniture Damage



Cats naturally scratch on a variety of objects and surfaces to sharpen their claws and as a form of communication, but it can result in unwanted damage in the home. There are ways to solve the problem without putting your cat through the trauma and discomfort of declawing. Most cats learn to use acceptable scratching areas. Here are some tips:

- Provide your cat with an alternative piece of furniture to claw – his/her own scratching post, designed especially for cats.
- Experiment with textures and surfaces. Some cats prefer to scratch on vertical surfaces (be sure the post is at least as tall as the cat when stretched), while others prefer a horizontal surface. Consider different textures. Some cats may like bark or wood, while others prefer thick rope or carpet.
- To entice your cat to use the scratching post, dust it with catnip or bait it with treats.
- When your cat is using the post, reinforce the behavior by offering verbal praise and treats.
- Use a repellent such as perfume or vinegar on the places or objects you don't want your cat to scratch on. You can also cover them with plastic or double-sided tape to make them undesirable.
- When caught in the act, a squirt of water from a spray bottle or a very firm “no” will remind your cat not to scratch where s/he shouldn't.
- Trim your cat's claws regularly to minimize damage.

How to Trim a Cat's Claws



- Use nail trimmers or clippers made specially for cats
- Gently grasp paw & apply light pressure to extend the claw
- Visualize the quick, and cut the tip of the claw off as illustrated above
- You may need to do a few at a time- many cats won't tolerate much more!
- Having another person to hold the cat's body can be helpful
- Don't make the experience traumatic- that will only make it harder next time! Do a few claws, then take a break & offer treats or affection to reward your cat for cooperating!