



SFSPCA Deterring Cats from Your Yard and Garden

Please call us at (415) 522-3084 if you suspect there are free-roaming cats in your area in need of spay/neuter services.

Feral and free-roaming cats make their homes where they find shelter and food, often in close proximity to humans. We understand that not everyone enjoys having cats in their yard or under their porch. Coupled with trap-neuter-return (TNR) and ongoing care, these quick steps can help you coexist with neighborhood cats and divert them from certain areas.

- **Remove access to food and shelter sources from your property.**
- **Scatter orange and lemon peels or spray with citrus-scented fragrances.** Coffee grounds as well as oil of lavender, lemongrass, citronella, or eucalyptus also deter cats.
- **Use an aromatic spray product**, such as dog and cat repellent, available at most urban hardware and gardening stores.
- **Plant the herb rue** to repel cats, or sprinkle dried rue over the garden.
- **Install an ultrasonic animal repellent** or a motion-activated water sprinkler, such as the ScareCrow™ or CatStop™ (Contech).
- **Use plastic carpet runners**, spike-side up, covered lightly in soil. They can be found at local hardware or office-supply stores. Or set chicken wire firmly into the dirt with the sharp edges rolled under.
- **Try embedding wooden chopsticks**, pinecones, or sticks with dull points eight inches apart set deep into the soil with tops exposed.
- **Cover exposed ground in flower beds** with large, attractive river rocks to prevent cats from digging.

- **Establish a litter box** by tilling the soil or placing sand in an out-of-the-way spot in your yard. Keep it clean and free of deposits.
- **Physical barriers:** Physically block or seal the location where the cats are entering with chicken wire or lattice once you are certain the cats are not inside. Be sure to search for kittens before confirming that the cats have left—especially during spring and summer, prime kitten season.

Feral and free-roaming cats are part of the city's landscape, and the San Francisco SPCA is committed to offering spay/neuter services to assist in reducing their population.

If you wish to learn more about having these cats spayed or neutered, please call the SF SPCA Community Cats Program at (415) 522-3084 or email us at communitycats@sfspca.org.

Note: All community cats that are brought into the SF SPCA for spay/neuter services are required to be returned to the same location in which they were trapped. Removing or relocating community cats is not permitted. If you wish for the cats and other wildlife to stay away from your property, please review the suggestions above.