



The Great Indoors

People often have this romantic idea about a cat's life outdoors. However, the reality is that nationwide, cats who get lost outside have a less than 2% chance of making it home again. Many of these "lost" cats are turned into shelters by good Samaritans, but shelters will often kill cats to make space for new incoming cats. **The leading cause of death among domestic cats in the US is being killed in shelters.**

Outside, cats can also be exposed to poisons, infectious diseases (rabies, distemper, feline leukemia, to name a few), parasites like fleas and ticks (which will then be brought into your home, exposing you to them too), and the dangers of being hit by cars or used as "bait" for illicit gaming.



The consensus among veterinarians and many organizations, such as the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), is that it's wiser to keep cats indoors.

Letting your cats roam outside is dangerous and not within NBAR adoption policies. While NBAR prefers cats to live inside, we know that many people like to have their cats with them outside on leashes or in enclosed spaces. Please remember, if you want to leash-train your cat, *it takes time and training* – so please be sure to do your research on how to do this safely and put in the time and training it takes to make your cat feel safe and comfortable. "Catios" are a great way for your cats to go "outside" but still be confined safely. Please be sure to do research and hire professionals who can construct a catio safely for both you and your kitty to enjoy.

Myths About Letting Your Cat Outside

Myth 1: Indoor cats get bored.

Fact: The truth is, indoor cats can and do get bored, but letting them outside is not a good solution. Instead, make your home more interesting – set up perches where they can watch birds, create food puzzles that allow your cat to "hunt" for their meals, play with your cat using interactive toys, etc.

Myth 2: Indoor cats get fat.

Fact: If your cat is overweight, the safest way to help them trim down is by combining portion control and daily exercise/play. Always consult your veterinarian before starting a new diet but putting your cat on a schedule, and feeding portions, will help trim your kitty down.

Myth 3: Indoor cats are destructive.

Fact: Destructive behavior is often a sign that something else is going on. Talk with your vet, but often, providing appropriate places for your cat to scratch will stop unwanted scratching.

Myth 4: My cat is safe when he goes outside because he stays in my yard/close to home.

Fact: Allowing your cat to roam freely outside is illegal in most cities (any animal not under your control (aka leashed) off your property is considered an "animal at large"). Cats also do not understand the concept of "staying in your yard," and can easily scale over a privacy fence. Cats actually roam quite large distances, and a lot can happen even within a small radius of your home.