

# THE LITTERBOX

Most cats have a preference of where they want to eliminate. By following the suggestions outlined in this handout, you'll be able to start off on the right foot with your new cat.

## Location

People are inclined to put the litterbox out of the way to minimize odor and loose particles of litter in the house. Often this leads to the box being placed on a cold basement floor near loud appliances or a furnace. These locations for the litterbox may be undesirable to your cat. The litterbox should be in a spot that affords your cat some privacy, but is also conveniently located for him/her.

## Type of Litter

Cats generally like fine-grained litters because they have a softer feel. However, high-quality, dust-free, clay litters are relatively small-grained and may be perfectly acceptable to your cat.

## Number of Boxes

The number of litterboxes you have should be the equal to the number of cats you have. Then, if the box is ever being occupied, another one is available. If you have multiple levels in your house, it is wise to put a litterbox on each level also.

## If your cat is not using the box

- **Rule out medical problems-** Cats with UTIs will avoid the litterbox because they associate the it with pain
- **Clean soiled areas-** Animals are highly motivated to keep soiling in an area that smells like urine and feces
- **An aversion to the litterbox-** Your cat may decide the litterbox in an unsuitable place to eliminate in if:
  - **The box is not clean enough**
  - **Has experienced painful urination or defecation in the box**
  - **Has been startled by a loud noise while using the box**
  - **Has been ambushed in the box by another animal or child**
  - **Associates the box with punishment**

## What you can do

- **Keep the litter box extremely clean**
- **Add a new box to a different location**
- **Make sure the box isn't near an appliance**
- **If ambushing is a problem, create more than one exit from the litterbox**
- **If you have multiple cats, provide a litterbox for each cat**