

# DESTRUCTIVE SCRATCHING

## Why do cats scratch?

Cats will scratch to:

- Remove dead outer layer on claws
- To mark territory by leaving visual mark and scent. Cats have scent glands on the pads of their paws
- To stretch their bodies and flex their feet and claws
- To work off energy

**The answers to the following questions will help you determine your cats scratching preferences:**

- **Location**-Where does your cat like to scratch? Objects close to sleeping areas, or entrances to a room are popular places.
- **What texture do they have?**-Are they soft, coarse, or carpeted?
- **What shape do they have?** - Are they horizontal or vertical?
- **How tall are they?** At what height does your cat scratch?

**Provide your cat with acceptable scratching objects**

- Rope-wrapped posts
- Corrugated cardboard logs
- Carpeted cat trees

**Cover inappropriate objects with materials your cat will find unappealing**

- Double-sided sticky tape
- Aluminum foil
- Sheets of sandpaper
- Plastic runners with pointy side up

**NEVER PUNISH YOUR CAT FOR SCRATCHING.** It is a natural behavior for them. Discipline with only be effective if you catch your cat *in the act of scratching*, stop them, and then provide them with something acceptable to scratch.