

What an Indoor Kitty Misses

An indoor kitty will miss...

- **Raccoons, skunks, feral cats, dogs:** All of these creatures live in every environment in California, and they will attack domestic cats.
- **Coyotes, mountain lions:** Coyotes are present in every part of California, including the densest parts of San Francisco. Mountain lions are spotted with increasing frequency in suburban cities, and are common in rural areas. Both regularly attack cats even when people are present. A recent autopsy of a mountain lion found that it had fed on multiple domestic animals.
- **Fleas, ticks, worms, illnesses:** These can range from a minor annoyance to a life threatening problems for your cat.
- **Cars, animal thieves, and cruel people:** Don't let your cat be a victim.



Will a fenced yard keep my cat safe?

Some people think a fenced yard will keep a cat safe, but there are too many factors out of your control. If your cat is startled, it may bolt, and it may fight to get away no matter how much it loves you. Cats are frequently spooked by loud noises, other animals and birds. A scared cat may hide and become difficult or impossible to find, no matter how confident he acts when he is normally inside your home.

Fences do not stop cats who are motivated to jump over them. Cats have been known to jump 8-10 feet without difficulty, and scale extremely tall outdoor walls. Also, a fence or wall will not keep all wildlife out. While a coyote may have difficulty with a fence, many other wild animals do not.

But isn't it natural and healthy for a cat to go outside?

This is a common misconception. The truth is that cats are very territorial animals, and most cats are most comfortable when they don't have to compete for their territory. Inside, they have their familiar surroundings and they have you. Outside, they have to deal with dangers such as other cats, dogs, and a variety of wildlife. Their natural response is to push these boundaries, but they will be happier if they don't have to. It doesn't take too long to get a cat used to an indoor-only life.

Most importantly, statistics show that cats who are let outside live only 2/3 as long as indoor-only cats, on average. For every story about a happy indoor-outdoor cat that lived to be 18, there is another of a cat that didn't make it past their first year.