

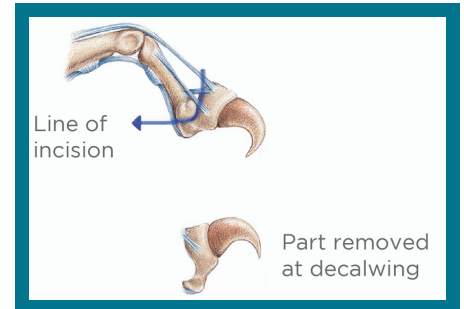
# MY CAT HAS SOME BAD SCRATCHING HABITS

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

---

### Should You Declaw Your Cat?

While some people believe that declawing their cats is the only way to prevent or resolve a scratching problem, this is simply not true. Declawing involves amputating the ends of a cat's toes which not only causes significant pain after surgery, but it often results in long-term pain and other serious behavior issues down the road.



In fact, declawing and tendonectomy procedures are illegal in some European countries and considered animal cruelty. Declawing should only be considered if a cat's owner has tried all other options to resolve destructive scratching behavior without success and is considering euthanasia.

### Addressing Your Cat's Scratching Habits

The best tactic when dealing with this habit is to not stop your cat from scratching, but to instead teach her where she can scratch. An excellent approach is to provide your cat with appropriate, cat-attractive surfaces and objects to scratch such as scratching posts. If you catch your cat in the act of scratching an inappropriate object, you can try startling him/her by clapping your hands, using a verbal correction, or even a quick squirt with a water bottle.



### Alternatives to Declawing Your Cat

- Clip your cat's nails regularly or consider putting plastic caps on your cat's claws (Soft Claws). These caps attach to the claws with a temporary adhesive lasting four to six weeks.
- Consult your veterinarian or the HSHC Behavior and Training Manager at (317) 219-3342.
- Utilize pheromones like Feliway that are available at pet stores or on Amazon.
- Provide a variety of scratching posts with different qualities and surfaces. Once you figure out your cat's preference, provide additional posts in various locations.
- Place items out of kitty reach or use a protective covering, for example:
  - Place speakers on top of an entertainment center or other location that is out of kitty reach
  - Place plastic, double-sided sticky tape, or sandpaper on furniture where your cat likes to scratch
  - Place scratching posts next to these objects as an alternative
  - Use seat/furniture covers



**Behavior Department**  
317-219-3342  
Behaviormanager@hamiltonhumane.com  
Behaviorcoordinator@hamiltonhumane.com  
**Humane Society for Hamilton County**

