

FACTSHEET

Reducing wandering

It's important to keep cats indoors overnight where they are protected from the dangers of cars and cat fights, and to protect native wildlife. But what about setting boundaries for your cat during the day, when you might wish to allow outdoor access but prevent wandering?

One of the first things to do is ensure your cat is desexed. Desexing helps reduce wandering behaviours and your cat will not want to try to find a mate! Desexing does not always stop all cats from wanting to explore as some cats just like looking around, but being sexually entire is one of the main reasons cats do wander.

Placing physical limits on the yard is the best way to keep your cat safely on your property. This is part of being a good neighbour as well as protecting cats from harm. A cat-proof fencing product from a company such as Oscillot (oscillot.com.au) is a popular solution, and is both reasonably priced and easy to install. This type of system uses rollers to cap existing fences, preventing cats from successfully scaling boundary fencing.

Another alternative is to install a cat run, or outdoor cat enclosure. Commercial cat enclosures are available and can be installed professionally or ordered as DIY kits. See our factsheet on **Cat-proof fencing and enclosures** for more information. Options range from enclosed tunnels to multilevel cat complexes. These may be attached to an existing structure, such as your home, or they may be free-standing. Outdoor enclosures require a financial (and possibly time) investment, but once installed will reduce the risks associated with your cat being outdoors.

Alternatively, you might like to restrict your cat's outdoor access to supervised time with you in the garden or courtyard. This is a lovely way to spend time with your cat, as well as investing time in your own relaxation. Human intervention is the means of stopping your cat from climbing the fence and wandering off your property. It's also helpful to plant a border around the area where you want your cat to spend time. Citrus smelling herbs are great for this purpose; as well as being non-toxic, most cats do not like the smell of citrus and will not want to brush past them to escape.

A final option is to train your cat to spend time outdoors using a harness and lead. Lead-walking may be a great way for your cat to enjoy the outdoors in safety, and a rewarding experience for both you and your cat. See our **factsheet** for more information.

Keep in mind that cats who have had lots of outdoor access in the past will need to be provided with enough stimulation indoors to stop them becoming bored and destructive. Multi-level scratch posts, interactive toys and window perches are perfect for this. Have a look at our factsheet, **Happy, healthy indoor cats** for more information.