



Cat Spray Solutions

www.catsandbirds.ca

Whether you have a cat of your own or not, you may be a victim of the Dreaded Cat Spray, a potent mix of urine and pheromones. Cats spray for a variety of reasons, mostly to mark their territories and to indicate their availability for mating.

If it's your own cat that's spraying, consider neutering him or her if you haven't already done so. Neutered cats are less likely to be territorial, and tend to spray less.

Since marking territory is a competitive sport for cats, they will often return to spray a specific spot, or spray where they can smell another cat has done so. So the first step is to remove the existing odor. We recommend a mixture of 2 cups of white vinegar, 2 cups warm water, and four tablespoons of baking soda in a spray bottle. Spray the affected area, let it dry, and then clean with soap and water, and spray it again. Avoid using cleaning products that contain ammonia, which just encourages more spraying. There are also a number of commercial cleaning products that contain enzymes that break down the smelly molecules.

Once you've removed the odor, turn your attention to the task of making the area unattractive to cats. There are a couple of different strategies that might work, depending on where the cat is spraying.

1) Fight Smell with Smells

There are a number of scents that are unappealing to cats, including citrus, eucalyptus, lavender, garlic, mustard and cinnamon. Essential oils from any of those sources will be the most effective, but if you have access to those plants, you can also use cuttings.

Mix 2 cups of white vinegar, 2 cups of warm water, and as many of the above smelly ingredients as you can locate. If you're using essential oils, add 10 drops of each oil to the mixture. (If you're using cuttings or flowers, add them and soak overnight. The garlic can simply be crushed and added whole.) Soak the affected area and repeat as necessary.

Mothballs are a common suggestion for discouraging cats, but we don't recommend using them, since they're toxic to humans, cats and other animals.

2) Get Prickly with It

Cats tend to prefer soft surfaces, and avoid prickly areas. So if the cat is spraying near your garden, you can 'close off' their route by placing twigs, pine cones, or other prickly yard trimmings down into the soil around your plants, or lay chicken wire over the area.

3) Water Deterrents

Cats dislike wet feet, and water generally, so if the affected area is near a garden bed, consider thoroughly watering the area at the time of day during which the culprit routinely visits. Another water solution is a motion-activated sprinkler.

4) Tech support

There are a number of ultrasonic cat deterrents on the market that might help to keep cats (and other wildlife) out of the area. They use a harmless burst of ultrasonic sound that is an annoyance to animals, triggered by a motion detector.