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How to Trim Your Cat's Claws

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Posted by Chewy

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Cat owners know that a healthy cat is a happy cat—one that can run, jump, climb and play to his heart's content. To do so, cats need healthy, trimmed nails to stay active. Cat nails are extremely important to their physical and emotional well-being. They play a role in marking territories (not just with claw marks, but with scent), stretching and exercise, climbing, playing and even walking! But the subject of claw upkeep can be a sensitive matter, especially if you ask your cat. Trimming cat nails is considered the humane alternative to declawing and an essential part of pet grooming. So, if you want to play cat salon and trim your furry friend's claws, we've got the necessary tips and tricks to make your cat claw concerns disappear and make the job a whole lot easier.

Embrace the Adjustment Period

Like any new experience, it's important to understand that your cat must become accustomed to having his paws held and his nails trimmed. Cats' paws are sensitive, so it's a good idea to start slow. Beginning the acclimation period while your cat is still young is ideal—the earlier the better. By gradually touching your cat's paws and eventually holding them, this shows your furry best friend that you have his best interest in mind and won't hurt him. [VetriScience Composure Behavioral Health Bite-Sized Cat Chews](#) are a great



Timing Is Everything

When approaching your cat to begin grooming, it's best to select a time at which your pet is most agreeable—after-meal lulls or end-of-day sessions when your cat is sleepy are best to ensure a calmer pet grooming process. Let your cat become acquainted with your pet grooming tool of choice. [FURminator Nail Clippers](#) give you an easy-to-handle option that comes equipped with an adjustable guide to ensure your pet's comfort and safety. Allow your cat to sniff the tool and provide a treat for a job well done. Gradually start creating a sound with the clippers, before trimming, to give your cat time to adjust to the noise. Be sure to follow up with plenty of chin scratching and praise for good behavior.

Choose a Method

According to Dr. Jeffrey Levy, a holistic house call veterinarian and pet expert in NYC, "My favorite [method] is to sit the cat on your lap, facing away from you. Perch the hindquarters on your lap [while using] one arm to steady your [cat and] hold the clippers. With your other arm, grasp a foreleg behind the elbow and lift to extend the leg while [gently] pressing a footpad between thumb and forefinger to expose the nail." Depending on your cat and his temperament, another method for clipping cat nails is to gently wrap him in a towel and expose one leg at a time for trimming. Draping a towel over your furry friend can help reduce anxiety while protecting you from accidental scratches. Although it is possible to successfully carry out the task solo, it's beneficial to have a partner handy to help with the process and serve as moral support for you and your pet.

Just a Trim

For your cat, becoming familiar with the sensation of getting his nails trimmed can be a scary experience. To allow your four-legged family member to get used to the process of having his nails cut, touch your cat's paws and allow him to adjust to the feeling of being handled. An animal's paws can be very sensitive, so be sure to go slow. Once your cat has become acquainted with the process, hold his paws to show him that you mean no harm. While trimming cat nails, it's important to be aware of the pink part of the nail—called the "quick"—where nerves and blood vessels are located. Be sure to clip only the white part of the claw and steer clear of getting too close to the quick. It's better to veer on the side of caution and cut too little, rather than too much. "If [your cat] panics or there is possibility of injury, don't force the issue," says Levy. "Instead, seek assistance from your vet or a professional groomer." If you do accidentally snip the quick, bleeding will occur but can be stopped with a little bit of pressure and a [styptic powder](#) or stick.

Stay Calm

When trimming your cat's claws, be sure to set up in a space that is comfortable, calm and free of distractions. It's important to make sure that there are no other pets in the room and that visibility outdoors is limited so that your cat isn't easily distracted. Remember, your cat feeds off your energy, so it's important to keep calm and maintain a positive attitude during pet grooming. Keep in mind that, when cutting cat nails, it's critical to pay close attention to the quick and stay conservative with your estimates. Moving at a gradual pace is key, as any sudden movement can startle your pet and increase the risk of harm.

Practice Makes Perfect

At first, the process of trimming your cat's claws may seem lengthy. It should be noted that cutting all of your cat's nails in one sitting is not necessary. Gradually working on one nail each day is a steadier and less stressful process that can help with the overall experience and prevent panic. Once a regimen is established, you can also determine which tools are best for you and your cat. In addition to nail clippers, the [FURminator Nail Grinder For Dogs and Cats](#) is uniquely designed with an easy-grip handle to make your personal cat salon routine more convenient. This helpful tool will be a great addition to your pet grooming arsenal. Time and experience will give you the experience needed to easily gauge where the quick is located and how to avoid it. Patience, time and consistency are necessary to properly introduce your cat to the tools and process. Although you might not be opening your own cat



When cutting cat nails, remember not to become discouraged. Pets naturally feed off our feelings, and showing frustration can lead to a painful and unpleasant experience. Trim regularly (every 10 days to 2 weeks) and be sure to provide a generous amount of treats, lots of praise and plenty of love for your cat's obedience and a job well done. If your feline friend continues to refuse to let you clip his claws, seek help from your vet or pet grooming professional.

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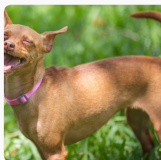


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