

Why Your Cat Is Hiding and How to Help Her Feel Safe

Anyone who has shared their home with a cat knows that cats love to hide. They love to tuck themselves into small spaces in your closet, under your bed, or in a cardboard box or paper bag left lying on the floor. Sometimes it can take a long time and a keen eye to find your cat when she is hiding.



By Kelley Bollen

There are many reasons why cats hide but mostly it's because they feel safe and secure when hidden. Part of this stems from the fact that cats are not only predators, they are also prey animals. So hiding is a behavior that keeps cats safe from being discovered by a predator while sleeping.

You will also notice that your cat often curls up in places where there are soft things to snuggle into like a pile of bedding or clothing. This is because cats like to be warm so curling up in a soft blanket helps cats conserve body heat.

Hiding is also the best coping strategy cats have when they are afraid or anxious. Cats will often run and hide when visitors come over, especially if there are little kids involved. When you bring a new cat home from an animal shelter, they often hide for the first few days. Cats will hide in new situations until they feel safe – so if you bring a new kitty home, let her hide for as long as it takes. It's very important to have food, water, and a litterbox available for the cat in the room where she is hiding. It's also nice to sit in the room with the kitty for a while everyday, read a book out loud, toss some treats, or toss a toy. Whatever you do – do not pull the cat out from her hiding place. She will come out when she feels safe. This period of hiding is very important so let your new cat do what she needs to do to get accustomed to you and your home.

Lastly, cats instinctively hide when they are sick – a behavior that reduces their vulnerability when they don't feel well. So if your cat suddenly starts hiding and it's not normal for your cat to do so, you might consider getting a medical exam to be sure there isn't a health issue.

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