

## Deterrents to Keep Outdoor Cats Out of Your Yard

**Smells that repel cats:** To keep cats out of yards or gardens, you can use these items you may have around your house. Citrus or lemon scents (orange peels, lemon peels), garlic, ammonia, vinegar, coffee grinds, pipe tobacco, mustard, citronella, or eucalyptus all deter cats. Plant the herb rue or sprinkle dried rue. The scents diminish over time, so re-applying is necessary.

**Granules or sprays:** You can purchase cat repellents online on Amazon.com and other retailers. These should be applied to the area according to directions. Two examples of these products are *Scram Cats* and *Nature's Cat Repellent*.

**Motion-activated sprinklers:** These have motion sensors that trigger a short blast of water when an animal enters the area. Scarecrow is one model; Black & Decker also offers a motion activated device. You can purchase these on Amazon.com and other retailers.

**Motion-activated, ultrasonic alarm:** This alarm emits a high-pitched sound that repels cats but can't be heard by humans.

**Secure outdoor trash:** Make sure your outdoor trash has a secure lid so that cats do not get into your trash to eat food scraps.

**Digging deterrents:** Plastic mats with flexible plastic spikes. Place on the ground with spike side up to discourage cats from digging. An example of these products is the Cat Scat Mat sold by Amazon and other retailers. Any plastic mesh fencing material placed on the ground will also deter cats from digging.

**Other digging deterrents:** Push chopsticks into small potted plants. Use pinecones, lava rocks, concrete pavers or stones as mulch to prevent cats from digging. Place large river rocks throughout the garden or use poultry fencing or landscape wrap around plants.

**Blocking off access:** Cats seek out dry, warm shelter away from the elements. Block off access to the places in which you don't want cats (making sure no cats are inside before doing so).

One-way doors can help ensure animals have departed but be mindful that kittens and wildlife babies are born from early spring through late fall. Trapped babies will suffer, starve slowly, die, and create a very unpleasant odor that lasts a long time. Also, the mother animal will desperately try to reach them which can result in damage. The best time to exclude cats and wildlife is before or after breeding season using a one-way door at that time.

To guide cats away from those areas, provide another shelter. There are many inexpensive options for community cat shelters.

**Talk to your neighbors:** If your neighbor is feeding free-roaming cats that live on their property, have them call Options Veterinary Care, the SPCA of Northern Nevada, Community Cats, or Feral at Heart to speak with someone about spay/neuter resources. We can also give them tips on helping their cats be good neighbors, including help available.



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