

TRAINING YOUR

CAT



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Foreword

Training cats is very different from the training techniques used to train dogs. Cat will rarely do anything simply to please their owners, especially if there is nothing in it for them or they simply do not feel like complying at the time the request or commands are given.

Training Your Cat

Chapter 1:

Cat Training Basics

Synopsis

When it comes to cat training techniques, there are some feline based systems that are recommended for more action proven results. The positive reinforcement and aversion stimulus are probably the only clear way to try and get the cooperation of the cat to comply with the owner's instructions.

The Basics On Cat Training

Some owners use tactics such as spraying with water misters, loud shakers or any startling noise to show disapproval for certain behavioral traits. In some instances these methods work very well, while in others it seems to create confusion and fear in the cat as it does not really understand what the owner is unhappy about. This is even more complicated when the cat associates these actions with play as some cats do actually enjoy being sprayed with water, thus the initial reason for implementing such corrective measures does not really seem to work at all.

Other methods that can be used to make the cat understand its negative actions would be to use a stern and commanding voice, to show disapproval when a particular undesirable actions is being committed by the cat. In most cases, this has proven to be very effective and certainly deters the cat from the action, even if it for a short time. Most experts would agree that using physical negative behaviors such as hitting the cat will not be beneficial to the animal and will also cause the animal to fear the owner. Physical beatings will also cause the cat to undergo behavioral changes which will eventually create a lot of stress and other misbehavior patterns.

Chapter 2:

Understand Your Cat

Synopsis

Cats are very sensitive animals, thus their forms of communications may not necessarily take on the actual vocal meows in order to make themselves understood by other cats. Thus, there is a need for humans to be able to read into these actions and understand the messages the cat is trying to convey.

Read The Signs

Understanding the difference between the natural nature of the cat and the habits that the cat picks up is very important. Trying to train the cat to do something that goes against the very core nature of it will not only be confusing but will cause the cat to resist altogether. This will create a very unpleasant and stressful situation for both the cat and the owner. Therefore, the responsibility is left to the owner to read up on such behavioral patterns and understand the difference, so that the appropriate actions can be taken when it is called for. Some of the ways a cat behaves are purely instinctive and it would be helpful and beneficial for the owner to be able to identify these differences.

The litter box is another good example of the cat's natural instincts being evident. Cats enjoy digging through loosely textured material, particularly to be used as their toilet area, thus the cat will willingly use the litter box for this purpose. The same would apply to the cat being fascinated with fluffy carpeting and a pile of socks or a ball of yarn, as all of these present some level of fascination for the cat, and indulging in playing with these seems to bring immense enjoyment to the cat.

Understanding the cat's vocal expressions will also help the owner identify with what the cat is trying to communicate. With some observation, the owner will eventually be able to discern quite well the various different tones used and interpret them accordingly.

Chapter 3:

Know How To Administer Discipline Correctly

Synopsis

Understanding the basic concept, that it may be rather hard to administer discipline on a cat, is very important. This is to ensure the owner is able to maintain a cool and level headedness that is required to be consistent and persistent in administering the discipline anyway.

Do It The Right Way

The following are some of the ways that are used to correctly administer discipline to a cat with minimal results, but results nonetheless:

- Learning to recognize and use the methods that only the cat will respond to will be a good place to start. It is an established fact that most cats will not respond unless it suits them to do so, thus there is a need to find ways to extract this response in the most effective and non violent way. In most cases, the element of surprise seems to work well enough. Once this element of surprise is used to mildly shock the cat into compliance, there could be some visible improvements in the cat to committing the offending act as often.
- It should be understood that most disciplinary tactics used, should be done at the very point the undesirable act is being committed by the cat. Disciplining the cat after the act is committed will not help in any way to make the cat understand the actions are unacceptable. Therefore, having something like a soft beanbag within arm's reach to throw at the direction of the cat without actually hitting the cat will help the cat understand the disapproval of the owner.
- Another popular tactic to use in the quest to discipline correctly would be to use strong smelling elements to deter a cat from roaming around places that are considered off limits. The downside to this would be the strong smell would also effect others around.

Chapter 4:

Learning About Resources And How To Use Them

Synopsis

Basically, learning to outsmart the cat is the way to go about when it comes to using the resources available. Any other way could prove to be both nerve racking and definitely stressful to both the cat and more so for the owner.

Know Your Stuff

Most cats will not respond well to any sort of commands unless they are interested in doing so, therefore using any resources available would help to aid the owner in getting the cat at least interested in responding to the command. It has been noted that cats are more likely to stop doing something if it proves to be unpleasant to their senses in any way. This vital piece of information can be used to work for the benefit of the owner in many ways, provided the owner is prepared to be resourceful. If the pet cat loves to scratch at furniture, instead of the scratching pole designated for this purpose, then applying something to the area where the cat tends to scratch would be better than trying to get the cat to stop this action using commands. Applying sticky tape or tin foil would be one option as cats don't like the sensation it creates on their paws.

Generally, the whole idea is to be able to use the soft approach of praise and treats to get the cat to understand the difference between bad behavior and acceptable behavior. Make an effort to observe what the cat dislikes and use these resources to stop the cat from doing things that are not pleasing to the owner. Another resource that is popular is the use of strong scents, as cats are more often than not repelled by these, thus here again providing a good resource for the owner to use.

Chapter 5:

Keeping Kitty Safe

Synopsis

There are a lot of measures that can be taken to keep a kitty safe. Most of these measures are very easy to enforce, while others may take a little time and thought. However, it is possible to keep a kitty safe, even though the general perception towards cats is that they are animals that simply refuse to be trained and confined.

Protecting Your Kitty

The following are some suggestions that can be used to provide the necessary precautions in keeping a kitty safe:

- Keeping the cats indoors is perhaps the most effective way of keeping the animal safe. Although this is not a full proof solution, as most cats will eventually find ways to get out once they are bigger, it is a useable solution for a kitten. This of course is only if all the members within the household unit are equally committed to being careful and alert to leaving doors and windows ajar.
- Other safety measure would be to keep all wires and all unplugged dangling cords out of the reach of the cat. Most cats are instantly attracted to anything hanging or moving, thus there is a need to ensure the wires are not left dangling. Other objects such as blinds should also be properly secure to ensure the cat does not become entangled in it. Besides this, keeping breakables out of the cat's path would also be a good idea. If observed carefully, the owner would be able to notice that the cat almost always walks, runs and jumps in the same areas and uses the same patterns 99% of the time.
- Keeping all string, yarn or thread away from the kitty would also be something that should be done as this could cause the cat to choke as they tend to play with these objects by chewing on them.

Chapter 6:

Training For Biting And Scratching

Synopsis

A cat's normal reaction to anything that is causing it discomfort is to bite or scratch. Therefore, locating the reason for this reaction will help the owner to either eliminate the uncomfortable factor that is annoying the cat or to work towards getting the cat to respond better and more favourably to the perceived intrusion.

Putting A Stop To Aggression

Teaching a cat to respond favorably takes some strategy on the part of the owner. Most cats enjoy being stroked, but they usually dictate when they have had enough by either biting or scratching. This is their way of saying they have had enough. However, this is not an acceptable way to show their fussiness and it would be wise to try to overcome this display with counter active measures. These may include stroking gently until there are signs that the cat is becoming fidgety and then stopping before the actual need to scratch, or change the stroking area to another pleasurable spot that will be acceptable for the cat. This will effectively put a stop to the cat's negative reaction before it can actually launch a bite or scratch.

The next step would be to carefully pick areas that would normally annoy the cat and alternate these with the more pleasurable spots, while going back and forth before the cat can act adversely to the stroking motion. Eventually these episodes should be prolonged until the cat eventually accepts the perceived uncomfortable and comfortable areas of stroking alongside each other. Cats are primarily of the predatory background, thus the need to bite into things at will. Providing the cat with suitable toys to bite into may help to control this natural urge.

Chapter 7:

Litter Box Training

Synopsis

Litter box training does not have to be a stressful and tedious affair. With the proper motivation the cat will more than willingly use it as their designated toilet. However, in order to achieve some level of success, the owner would have to adopt some rather innovative ideas to create the ideal setting that will encourage the cat to use the litter box consistently.

Helpful Hints

The following are some recommendations on how to go about house training the kitten to use the litter box:

- Most kittens will instinctively use the litter box, simply due to the fact that the contents of the box closely resemble the material of what they would be wired to recognize as a suitable place to ease themselves. However, for others it may require a little prompting or training. Firstly, the owner would have to observe the kitten's various toilet times. Then by gently placing the kitten in the litter box at the anticipated time, the kitten will be encouraged to make use of it. This should be done repeatedly until the kitten identifies with the litter box and instinctively looks for it when its toilet time.
- The owner will have to ensure that the ideal height of the litter box is taken into account to ensure the kitten will be able to easily climb in and out. Also, placing the litter box in an isolated and quiet area will give the kitten the privacy and the quietness it requires to do its business. Avoid placing the litter box in areas where there are high possibilities of distractions and noise. This will startle the kitten and cause it to avoid the litter box altogether.
- Keeping the litter box clean is also very important as cats are very particular about the cleanliness of their surroundings and will rarely use a litter box that they consider to be dirty.

Chapter 8:

The Issues With Not Training Your Cat

Synopsis

The consequences of not training a cat can be very damaging both to the cat and to the owner. Without some level of control, a cat is not able to understand and control its habits, which in turn will cause problems that are often irreparable.

It's For Their Good

There are some much focused areas that need some level of training to be incorporated, otherwise the results can be very bad indeed. Litter training is probably the easiest to cope with and also the area that could potentially cause a lot of problems for the owner if it is not done very early on. If there is no clear indication of a litter box being available, the cat will happily and resourcefully find a suitable alternative. As cat poop can be rather strong in odor, having a cat that in not trained to do its business in a litter box would eventually stink out the whole house or dwelling place.

Another area that could eventually become an issue if not checked would be the scratching of furniture and other household items such as curtains. This trait, if left unchecked, will cause a lot of damage that is almost always irreparable. There are various ways that can be adopted to stop the cat from such activity and prolong the lifespan of any furniture used.

Catching the cat in the act of doing something that is unacceptable would require immediate attention and reprimand consequences. If the owner is unable to catch the cat in the act, simply reprimanding the cat, by pointing to the mistake will have little or no consequences to the cat. Therefore, there is a need to keenly observe the cat in the initial stages of being introduced into the equation, before any particular training is carried out.

Wrapping Up

Training your cat can be quite difficult. With the right approach and with the use of the right methods and techniques, you will surely see results. The book you have just read has gave you some insight and has shown you that although it may be tough, training a cat is possible. Good luck!