



Keep cats out of your garden with safe deterrents

Cats may enter private property for a variety of reasons including shelter, food, water, hunting opportunities or access to sunny areas. It is not an offense for pet cats to roam public spaces or private property, under the Companion Animals Act 1998.

If a cat is visiting your property there are several safe and harmless steps you can take to discourage repeat visits.

Start with your property

Remove anything that may attract cats to your yard. You can do this by ensuring you:

- keep rubbish bins securely closed
- do not leave pet food outside
- remove food scraps from compost areas
- keep bird seeds off the ground and use feeders designed to reduce spillage
- check for sheltered spaces under decks, sheds or verandas that may provide a hiding place.

Make garden areas less inviting

Cats like soft, loose soil for digging or toileting. Make your yard less likely to attract cats by:

- covering garden beds with mulch, pinecones, large pebbles or coarse gravel
- using plant-safe mesh or lattice over freshly planted beds until plants grow
- planting dense, low-growing vegetation to reduce open digging areas
- covering sandpits when they are not in use.

Make sure to avoid any sharp objects, wire, nails or anything that could injure a cat or wildlife.

Use gentle, safe deterrents

The following options can help discourage cats from entering your property, while keeping them free from harm.

- Motion-activated sprinklers – these provide a brief spray of water when movement is detected and are generally one of the most effective humane deterrents
- Motion-activated lights – can be very effective in deterring nighttime visits
- Commercial pet-safe repellents – ensure you only use products specifically labelled as safe for cats and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Please note that repellents may need to be reapplied after rain and are usually most effective when combined with other deterrent methods.

Protect wildlife

If cats are visiting your property due to birds, reptiles or small mammals, you can reduce opportunities for hunting by:

- keeping bird feeders away from dense shrubs where cats can hide
- providing elevated or enclosed feeding stations for birds
- creating habitat areas that are difficult for cats to access

- avoiding leaving injured wildlife or food sources accessible at ground level.

What not to do

Never use methods that may injure, poison or cause prolonged distress to cats or other animals.

Do not use any of the following methods:

- poison, pesticides or toxic substances
- mothballs or household chemicals
- chilly, pepper, essential oils or other substances that may irritate or harm animals
- traps that may injure an animal or leave it exposed to heat, cold or stress
- any method that could potentially harm wildlife, pets or children.

If you are unsure whether a deterrent is safe, check the product label or seek advice from us or a qualified animal professional.

If the problem continues

If a cat continues to visit your property despite using humane deterrents; it may be worthwhile to consider having a polite conversation with the owner about the issue.

We encourage you to use humane deterrents that protect both pets and local wildlife, while helping reduce nuisance behaviours.