

HOW

Keep your Cat off your Counters

TO

Story by M. Page Jones

Cats are by nature hunters, that's why they like the vantage point of high ground that includes, unfortunately, our kitchen counters.

Recently, I tried to stop my cat from jumping on the counters by squirting her with a toy squirt gun. Guess what? She LOVED it! She started waiting until I was in the room, then scamper up the cabinets, and wait for the waterworks to begin. . . sigh.

So, I started researching ways to teach her, (and her sister who now had learned the fun game) to stay off my kitchen surfaces.

Noise!

Place baking sheets on the edge of the countertop, so when they jump up they'll land on it. The noise and the sliding motion will soon teach them that it isn't where they want to go!

Change the Surface.

Lining countertops with tinfoil, upside-down plastic rug protectors, or placemats covered in double-sided tape can also act as a deterrent. It won't take long for cats to learn this is not a surface they want to be on, then you can remove the items.

Alternative.

If you take something away, you always have to add something to take its place. Carpeted cat tree furniture and shelves are perfect. Especially, shelves that attach to windows so they can keep an eye on those birds outside!

DO NOT!!!

I learned spraying a cat with water is actually frowned upon. Also, I'm sure I don't have to say this





but don't shove, swat, or yell at them. You could harm your pet, and often the cat will learn to be afraid of you - not the counter.

The Experts.

The ASPCA suggests using an "environmental punisher," such as *The Snappy Trainer* or the *ScatMat*. These devices deter cats from jumping on counters even when you're not home, so your pet won't learn to simply wait until you're not around. Don't use an environmental punisher if your kitty is especially skittish. The cat may become reluctant to even enter the room, and this could lead to anxiety issues.

We love our kitties. They never cease to amuse and entertain us. Hopefully, with these ideas, we can live together even more in harmony! 🐾



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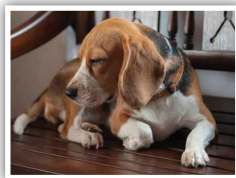


Ask a Vet

Send your questions for our Guest Vet to publisher@
 MyWagazine.com and yours could be printed next!

Q: "I have a fairly small dog (about 12 pounds) who will sometimes shake for no apparent reason. Is this because he is scared or nervous? Or could it be a seizure or some other kind of illness?"

- Audrey Peck, Pet Parent of Smooches (Beagle breed)



A: "My little dog shakes is a frequent worry heard by veterinarians. The causes can be varied with some being normal and some not. Shaking or tremors can be caused by various medical conditions, that include anything from a central nervous disorder, toxins, and possibly even metabolic conditions that disrupts the body's ability to control normal muscle movement. On the other hand, it can simply be your pet's reaction to fear or even as simple as being cold.

I would suggest a visit to your veterinarian where he or she will cover all the possibilities for the shaking. They will go over any changes or events in the home, or anything out of the ordinary that has occurred around the time the shaking started. They will ask about the frequency and timing of the shaking. From there they can determine through a thorough exam and medical workup the steps that should be taken to help your little friend."



GUEST VET - DR. KENNETH E. LAYTON

Dr. Layton graduated with honors from Louisiana State University in 1996 where he was a graduate inductee of Phi Zeta—the honor society of Veterinary Medicine. Prior to enrolling in LSU, Dr. Layton served as a Sergeant in the Air Force from 1985-1989 before receiving an Honorable Discharge. Ken's been affiliated with Pine Valley since 2002. He purchased the practice in February 2008.

Possessing a lifelong passion for the medical field and to work with animals, Dr. Layton strives to make your experience at his veterinary hospital as practical and comfortable as possible, while providing the highest quality medical care available. Visit pinevalleyanimalhospital.com for more information.