

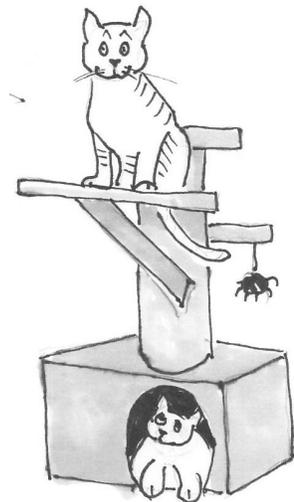
Door Darting

What does the door darting look like?

After sleeping all day while you are away at work, Mittens hears the sound of the door opening and before you know it, she is through your legs and out the door! Or when you enter the door with groceries in hand, you don't even notice when Binky slips out before you close the door. With nothing to do all day, the excitement and allure of the outside with all of its smells has just enticed Mittens and Binky into becoming door dashers. Door dashing can often be the highlight of the day for many cats. It can also be the most dangerous time of the day for the cats that dash outside. Getting hit by a car, getting lost, ingesting poisons and becoming a meal for a predator are just a few dangers they may encounter. Cats are also very good hunters so there is also their impact on the small animal, reptile and bird population to think about. You can save a lot of little lives out there and possibly your cat's life by meeting more of her needs inside and by training her not to door dash.

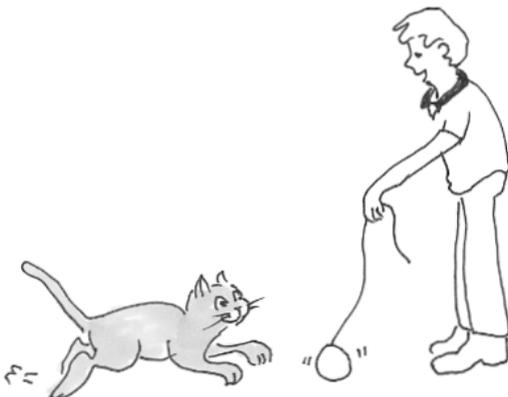
How can we safely leave the house?

Make the door a "no greeting area"—basically ignore your cat at the door. All attention when you depart home will now be given away from the door. It is a good idea to set up a Hello/Goodbye station (cat tree, table, bench or chair) somewhere away from the door to the house. Here, you will give attention to your cat when you come home and when you leave the house. In the morning you will entice your cat to the H/G station with her food or treats. Make sure you have everything you need and are ready to go out the door. Leave a food dispensing ball, food puzzle or can food at the H/G station and then head to the door and leave the house. The treats or food you use will need to be very enticing, something your cat will choose over following you to the door.



What do we do when we arrive home?

Open the door slowly in case your cat is at the door and be ready to body block with your leg if necessary to keep her in. Do not talk to her or give her eye contact and walk directly to the H/G station where you can verbally praise her and give her treats. Keep treats close by so you can reward her immediately when she is at the H/G station. Be consistent with ignoring your cat at the door. Be diligent that she doesn't slip out. Reward with very high level treats at the H/G station when you leave and return from your house.



What else can we do to prevent the door dash?

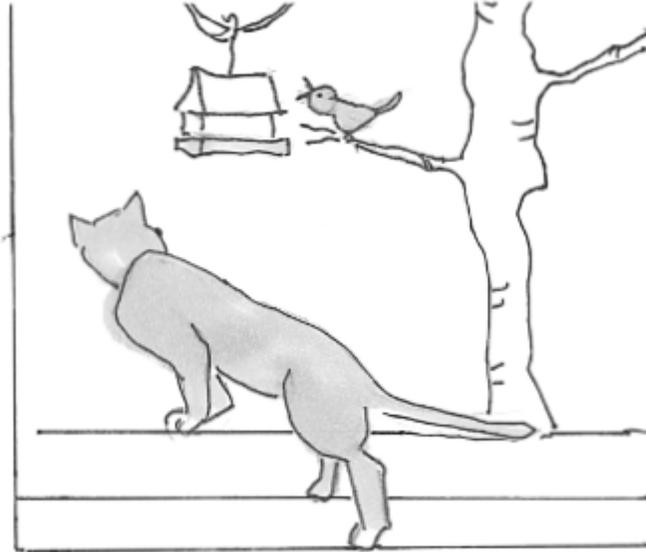
Environmental Enrichment

Bring the outside in by doing more types of play that utilize the feline senses of hunt, seek and play. Come to our [Feline Environmental Enrichment workshop](#) or review the [Environmental Enrichment – Cats Just Want to Have Fun](#) handout for ideas.

Build a Catio

Provide a safe enclosed outdoor space ([catio](#)) for your cat. There,

she can safely get a view of the outside and take in all the smells of the garden. See marinhumane.org/catenclosures or attend our [Feline Environment Enrichment](#) class for more information.



Feline Resources:

We are here to help. Marin Humane’s Behavior & Training department conducts various [cat workshops](#). Sign up on our Cat Behavior (MarinHumane.org/catclasses) page. We also have Cat Behavior Consultants who are available for private training or [consultations](#) (phone, online or in-home) at 415.506.6284 or CatBehavior@MarinHumane.org. More information about cat behavior is available on our website at MarinHumane.org/cathandouts.