

Knocking Things Over

A kitten will sooner or later knock over and break something of value. In most cases, this is not an accident. Some kittens will actually stretch out their front paws to knock things over. It may seem like a strange thing to do; however, this is due to the kitten's curiosity and play drive. Kittens when left alone for extended periods of time will look for something to entertain themselves. One of the things they may do is knock things over. This is not done out of spite; it is the result of the kitten being bored. Kittens do enjoy company, and when left alone for extended periods of time, they simply get bored.

Here are some suggestions for addressing this behaviour:

- ✓ Kitten-proof your home. Put items away so the kitten does not have anything to knock over.
- ✓ Offer the kitten a cat tree and place it by a window. Put the cat tree in a location that gives her an excellent high view of her territory. Rubbing a little catnip on the tree will pique her curiosity and she will investigate it. Soon she will begin marking it to make the tree her very own by rubbing on it, scratching it, and laying on it.
- ✓ Keep fragile items in a place the kitten cannot reach.
- ✓ If the kitten knocks items over only when left alone, take short trips out of the house. When you return, if she has not knocked items over, give her lots of attention and tell her what a good kitty she is. Gradually extend the length of time you leave her alone, ignoring her when she has knocked items over and giving her lots of attention and praise when she does not.
- ✓ Offer the kitten a different toy to play with and to entertain herself with when you are leaving the house. Toys filled with treats are great fun and stimulate kittens. Figuring out how to get the treats out of the toy is both entertaining and stimulating. When your kitten has toys that stimulate and entertain her, she has less reason to look for items in your home to knock over.
- ✓ When the kitten knocks items over when you are home, you can use a spray bottle and spray her, but only if you can catch her in the act of knocking items over. Or you can snub her and walk away. Do not give her any attention for at least 10 minutes. When using a spray bottle, it is important that the kitten is conditioned to the spray being bad and does not associate it with you, so hide the bottle the second after you spray her.
- ✓ If you have decorative items you want to leave out, consider getting some glue dots to stick under your decorative items to keep them in place even if she does try to knock them over.
- ✓ It is a good idea to consider heavier items for decoration purposes. The heavier the items are, the more difficult it will be for her to knock them over.
- ✓ Spend time interacting with your kitten. She needs and enjoys your attention.
- ✓ Provide play periods with family members; the kitten needs her locomotive and predatory play drive needs met.

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If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us