

## Purr-fectly 'Green' Cat Care Tips

(ARA) - She can jump from the floor to the top of the refrigerator, or bound across your desk without disturbing a single sheet of paper. Your cat personifies the graceful, enviable sure-footedness of her species. But what about her eco-footprint?



With 88 million domesticated cats in the country (according to the National Pet Owners Survey by the American Pet Products Association), the question isn't just academic. Like their human companions, pets' modern lifestyles consume natural resources and can contribute to environmental issues like greenhouse gases and the waste stream.

"As consumers and responsible pet owners, we are all looking for ways to care for our pets' health and their environment," says Jill Cordes, host of America's first broadband pet channel [www.Petstyle.com](http://www.Petstyle.com). "Many of us are already putting eco-friendly practices into action in our own lives, from buying organic food to shopping with reusable bags and switching to natural household cleaners. Adopting 'green' pet care habits is a natural extension of our environmental consciousness."

You can become a "greener" cat owner with 10 simple steps, Cordes advises:

1. Give them shelter. Overcrowding at animal adoption centers strains resources. You can help ease the problem - and possibly save an animal's life - by adopting from a shelter rather than buying a cat from a pet store or breeder. You may also save money if you adopt from a shelter where many animals are likely to already be vaccinated, spayed or neutered. Visit [www.aspca.com](http://www.aspca.com) for more information.

2. Use protection. Get your cat spayed or neutered. Unplanned, unwanted "deliveries" often wind up in

shelters, contributing to the overcrowding problem. Plus, spaying and neutering can help reduce your cat's risk of developing uterine, ovarian, or testicular cancer.

3. Tag, you're it. Be sure your cat always wears a name tag (or license, if your municipality requires cats to be licensed). If he gets lost, the tag will help any good Samaritan who finds him return him to you. Plus, you'll conserve the gas you would waste driving around the neighborhood hunting for him, and the paper for those "missing" posters.

4. Keep it clean - and gentle. Replace traditional pet care and cleaning products that may contain harsh chemicals with gentle, all-natural products.

5. Potty all the time. Choose environmentally friendly cat litter like ARM & HAMMER Essentials Clumping Cat Litter. It's made with natural biodegradable corn fibers which are sensible for the environment, and absorbs twice the liquid compared to regular clumping clay litter. Plus, the addition of baking soda eliminates odor problems instantly. Visit [www.armandhammeressentials.com/litter.aspx](http://www.armandhammeressentials.com/litter.aspx) to learn more.

6. Food for thought. Just as added hormones or pesticides in your food aren't good for you, they're not good for your cat, either. Look for pet food that is natural, organic and FDA-certified.

7. Quench their thirst. Change your pet's water and food bowl regularly to eliminate potential disease, insect or other pest infestations. Be sure to use filtered tap water rather than bottled water, which weighs on your wallet and the environment.

8. Play ball. Purchase toys made from sustainable fibers or recycled materials, or entertain your cat with homemade toys crafted from recycled materials, like a scratching pole made from old carpeting. And remember, you will always be her favorite - and most eco-friendly - toy.

9. Into the wild ... or not. Try to keep your cat inside as much as possible to avoid exposure to injury, illness and predatory wildlife. If your cat craves the outdoors, however, try to keep his outside time supervised in an enclosed area.

10. Purr-tanical gardens. In an enclosed space, plant a small garden in your backyard for your cat and stock it with cat-safe herbs and flowers. Just be sure kitty is always supervised, and stays in her own yard - otherwise you may find yourself having to explain her embarrassing visit to your neighbor's tomato patch.

Courtesy of ARAcontent