

**What To Get Your Cat For Christmas**  
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Many of us will be thinking about presents to give to our companion cats for the holidays. What makes a good gift for a cat? Certainly anything that improves the quality of your cat's life would be wonderful gift for her and for you. Consider taking her to your veterinarian for that annual health exam that you have been putting off. She might not think it is very much fun, but the reward for her and you is a longer and healthier life.

Most cats seem to like the stimulation provided by outside views. You can build your cat an outside cage where she can be outside on nice days but secure from getting lost or injured in the neighborhood. An alternative is to build or buy an elevated perch where your cat can sit or lie and look out a window and/or watch the activities of the household. Cats seem to like to rest on elevated places. Placing a bird feeder outside a window can be attractive to your cat. There are also videos of birds and small animals especially made to entertain cats.

Puzzle toys are often attractive to cats. Boxes or tracks with balls that can be moved around are fun for lots of cats. Puzzle balls with food treats inside can also be attractive. Feathers on strings or even strings on the end of sticks can be very entertaining for cats. Toys or scratching posts with catnip are fun for most cats. You can grow catnip for your cat or even grow "kitty greens" for your cat to eat. Think about adding an additional scratching post for your cat to give her another place to scratch.

Toys for cats don't have to be expensive. Many cats enjoy playing in empty boxes or paper bags. Whatever you buy or make for your cat, think about her safety. No sharp edges, nothing that can be swallowed (unless it is food) and nothing that can fall over. Be especially careful of strings, Christmas tree tinsel and ribbons that cats may try to swallow. They can cause serious problems.

Probably the best gift that we can give our cats is the gift of ourselves. Spending quality time with our cats, playing with them, petting them or just sitting with them will be rewarding for them and for us. Especially during the busy holiday season, spending a little extra time with our cats can enrich all our lives.