



# THE CAT – *The supreme hunter*



Cats are supreme hunters. They are happiest when their lives and their environments support their natural behaviors – high perches for “spying” on their territory, hidden routes of movement for stalking their prey, and toys and games that allow for hunt-like play. Giving them opportunities for solo play (toys that move on their own, window access to watch animals outside, even kitty TV) as well as interactive play with their human(s) can accomplish this!

In the wild, cats would hunt for small prey six or more times a day, each hunt being a burst of energy. So arranging a cat’s day around multiple short bursts of activity and interactive play, followed by feeding after their successful “hunt”, will offer the most satisfying lifestyle. People sometimes complain that their young cats become excited with play and have difficulty calming down afterward, but this is usually the result of inappropriate play which leaves them in an excited state.

Start your play session just as the hunt would happen in nature: The prey would be its most energetic, flying or darting away from its pursuer. As “the hunt” continues, you can imagine that the prey would begin to tire, resting for moments between short jerky attempts at escape. Finally, the exhausted prey would give in to the crafty predator, so let your cat catch the toy. And now would be a good time to let your kitty celebrate her successful hunt by putting out some tasty tidbits! Using toys that simulate the hunt, like Da Bird, Cat Dancer, and Cat Catcher, are great choices for interactive play and will make for a happy cat!

**A final note:** Back in September, we discovered how puzzle toys like the Kong® can give dogs jobs to do to earn their food. Cats can benefit from the same kinds of mental stimulation offered by puzzle toys such as the PetSafe SlimCat ball and Fish-bowl Feeder and the Kitty Kong® Wobbler. This can be particularly good for young, active, playful cats as well as for overweight cats who would benefit from working more and eating slower. (For more tips on enriching your kitty’s life, go to [http://www.mywoofgang.com/purr\\_view.php](http://www.mywoofgang.com/purr_view.php).)

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