



Cat Home Assessment

An arthritis-friendly home, seen through your cat's eyes

PETSLIKEMINE
ARTHRITIS & MSK SPACE

CAT'S NAME	ASSESSMENT DATE	WALKING WITH
_____	_____	_____

A cat's world is the home. It doesn't go for walks, it moves between resources: the tray, the food, the water, a warm bed, a favourite high shelf. Arthritis quietly removes the jumps and climbs your cat once made without thinking, and owners rarely notice until a problem appears. **Tick the conditions that are already true. The unticked ones are where to start.**

1 Litter trays

- At least one tray has sides low enough to step into without climbing — under 5cm at the entry.
- Trays are on the floor your cat spends most time on, with no stairs between cat and tray.
- The tray is large enough to turn around in without pressing against the sides.
- There is one tray per cat, plus one spare.
- The litter is soft underfoot and deep enough to dig.

A cat going outside the tray is usually sore, not naughty. A high-sided tray hurts to climb into, so the cat finds somewhere easier. This is one of the most missed signs of feline arthritis, and cats are sometimes punished or rehomed for it. Lower the entry before assuming it is behaviour.

2 Getting up & down

- Favourite high spots have a step, stool, or ramp leading up to them.
- Tall climbs are broken into stepping stones the cat can manage one stage at a time.
- Good low-level alternatives exist, so reaching height isn't the only way to feel safe or warm.
- Landing surfaces are non-slip, so a shorter jump doesn't skid.

3 Food & water

- Bowls are at floor level or only gently raised — no awkward crouch or stretch.
- Food and water are reachable without a jump or a climb.
- Water is offered in more than one place, away from the food.
- Bowls are wide and shallow, kind to whiskers and a stiff neck.

4 Beds & warmth

- A soft, supportive bed sits somewhere warm and draught-free at floor level.
- Warm resting spots don't require a climb to reach.
- The bed is easy to step into, with low or no sides.
- A warm spot is near where the family sits, so warmth and company aren't a choice.

5 Floors & routes

- Slippery floors on the main routes have rugs, runners, or mats for grip.
- The routes between tray, food, water, and bed are short and level.
- No small jumps or gaps stand in the way of the everyday rounds.
- Clutter is cleared from the paths the cat uses most.

6 Going outside

- The cat flap is easy to push and low enough to step through without climbing.
- There's a step or ramp on both sides of the flap if there's a drop.
- The garden is reachable without a high jump down from a ledge or wall.
- An indoor tray is available too, for days the cat would rather stay in.

7 Grooming & claws

- The coat over the back and hips is checked for scurf or matting, and unreachable areas are helped along.
- Claws are checked regularly in case they're curling toward the pads.
- A low or horizontal scratching surface is available — a stiff cat can't use a tall post.
- Grooming is gentle and in short sessions, respecting sore joints.

8 What your cat tells you

- Note any jumps the cat has stopped making, or now breaks into stages.
- Note where the cat rests now compared with six months ago.
- Note routes it has changed, or high spots it no longer visits.
- Note anything it has simply stopped doing, and bring it to your vet.

PRIORITY ACTIONS THIS MONTH

A low-entry litter tray is often the first and best change.

- Sort the litter tray entry first, before anything else.
- Add one step or ramp to the most-missed high spot.
- Put grip down on the one floor the cat slips on most.
- Move a warm bed to floor level, near the family.

How to use. Tick the conditions already met; the unticked ones are your to-do list. Then crouch down to your cat's height and look again — heights, gaps, and obstacles show up that you can't see standing. Do it with someone if you can. Reassess every six months, or sooner if anything changes, and compare against the date above.

**THEIR WORLD IS SMALL.
MAKE IT EASY.**