

## Animal Friends Presents How to Trim a Cat's Claws

What's more relaxing than sitting on your comfy sofa, sipping a cup of tea while your little kitty snuggles contentedly on your lap? But then, your sleepy kitty stirs a little and starts to stretch. You tell yourself, "Stay still and remain calm—maybe he won't..." But then it happens. He instinctively starts kneading your lap, and you regretfully think, "Why oh why didn't I trim his nails?" Nothing can ruin a pleasant moment like the feel of tiny needles in your leg! Since declawing can bring even more challenges for you and your cat, it would benefit both you and your kitty to incorporate nail trimming into your grooming routine. So take a deep breath, grab a pair of nail trimmers and get started! It's easier than you might think.

1. Your cat usually feels more secure when you hold him against you. As you support him with one arm, hold his paw and extend the nail with one hand and work the trimmers with the other. Some cats can be more easily handled if they are gently wrapped in a towel with only one paw extended at a time.
2. Hold his paw with your thumb on top and your fingers supporting his paw underneath. As you gently press on his paw, his nail will naturally extend.
3. Clip only the very tip of the nail. If your cat has light-colored nails, you'll be able to see where the pink color starts. That is the vein and you want to make sure you don't accidentally cut it. If your cat has dark nails and you can't see the vein, you'll be fine if you just trim only the tip.
4. If you do accidentally cause the nail to bleed, just apply some styptic powder, which is available in any pet supply shop, to the end of the nail.
5. Remember that you don't have to cut all of his nails in one session. Do a few nails at a time and stop if things get too stressful.
6. Afterwards, give your cat a tasty treat to reward him for his patience and good behavior!

Teach your cat that having his paws touched doesn't always have to be stressful. Try gently massaging his paws while you are petting him. If you have a kitten, start trimming his nails while he's young so he won't have time to build up a negative response.

If you think you'd feel more comfortable with hands-on training, your vet will be happy to show you how to trim your cat's nails.

So go ahead and take a little break from your hectic day. Sit on your big comfy sofa, drink your cup of tea with your kitty on your lap...and savor the moment.

Thinking of declawing? Download a free poster about why cats have claws (and how to live with them!) on the "Resources" page of [www.ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org](http://www.ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org).

