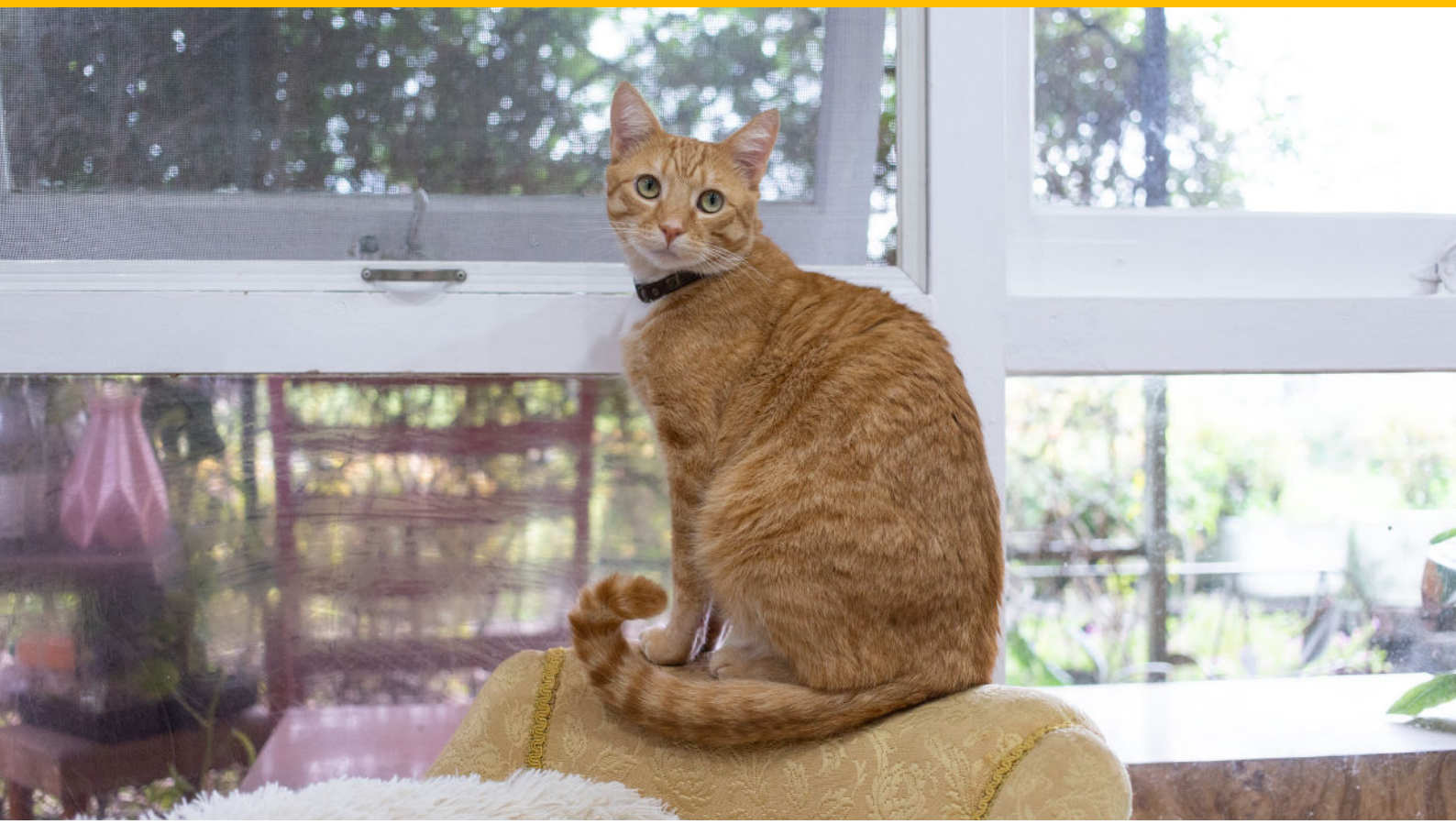
Transitioning to the safe-at-home lifestyle

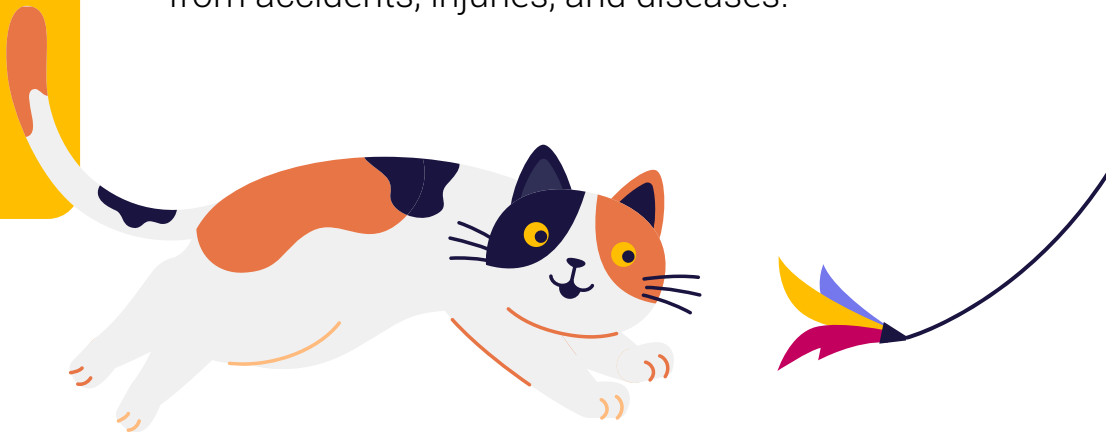
RSPCA New South Wales



Did you know...

a cat kept safe at home will live on average **10 years longer** than a cat that is allowed to roam?

Even if your cat currently roams, you can help them make the change to staying safe at home – old cats can learn new tricks! Follow these simple pointers to give your cat the best chance at success as you make the change to the safe-at-home life. It's worth the effort to build an even stronger bond with your cat and keep them safe from accidents, injuries, and diseases.



This project has been assisted by the NSW Government through its Environmental Trust.

Make a plan



Cats are creatures of habit, hence changing their routine will be smoother with some planning and patience.

First, ensure you can meet all your cat's needs at home. This includes food, water, toilets, comfy places to sleep, and opportunities to express all their natural behaviours like hiding, scratching, climbing, and stalking, chasing and pouncing (on toys and treats).

You can plan to keep your cat exclusively indoors, or a combination of indoors and outdoors in an enclosure or escape-proof backyard. While not suitable for every cat, you could even consider training your cat to walk on a harness so you can enjoy exploring outdoors together. Whatever option you choose, life at home can be happy, fun and fulfilling for your cat.

Timing is everything

Transitioning to staying at home can take some time to get used to. Take it slow – the process might take 3-4 weeks or longer. Allowing your cat plenty of time to get used to the new routine can help to minimise frustration and increase your chances of success.

It can help to start by keeping your cat inside at night initially then gradually increasing the time they spend at home during the day. Taking advantage of times when your cat will naturally prefer to be inside can also make the transition easier:

- **When you bring home a new cat or kitten**
- **When moving house.** Moving can be a great opportunity to associate a new environment with a new routine. You will also be keeping your cat safe from dangers in an unfamiliar place.
- **When it's feeding time.** Gradually extend the time your cat spends indoors after feeding until they become accustomed to staying at home.
- **When it's cold outside.** Winter is an ideal time to get your cat used to staying at home. When it's cold outside, your cat is likely to prefer to be snuggling with you, cosy and warm indoors.



You're not alone...

More than 50% of cats in NSW already enjoy a safe-at-home lifestyle. That might include some of your friends, relatives, and neighbours, which means you're never far away from another cat lover who can help you on this journey.

Visit our website for more information, encouragement, inspiration, and to sign up to our community of cat lovers keeping their cats safe at home.

rspcansw.org.au/keeping-cats-safe

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