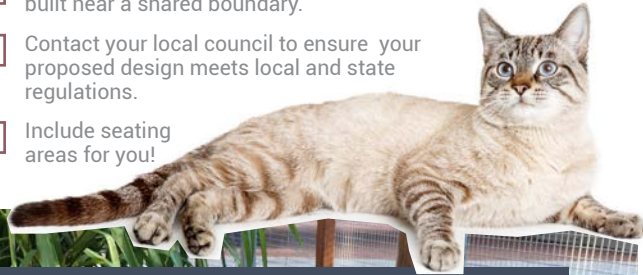


Catio design ideas

Checklist for creating a safe catio space:

- Ensure that there is enough room to exercise freely and allow your cat(s) 24 hr access to the catio, via a tunnel or cat door that connect from the catio to your house.
- It is important to incorporate mental and physical enrichment elements into your catio, such as platforms at different levels for viewing, jumping and resting.
- Cats love elevated walkways and perches but make sure kittens and seniors are able to reach all areas safely; use ramps, shallow stepping stones or close stepped shelves.
- Include some soft ground to create the true outdoor experience (lawn, groundcover) and mulch on planting beds is the perfect outdoor litter.
- Provide planting and/or plants in large pots for shade and hiding. Some common plants are toxic to pets so check the *GeoCatch Catio Planting Guide* for safe plants to use.
- A substantial scratchy pole covered with outdoor carpet or natural fibre/sisal rug or rope is perfect for climbing exercise, stretching and scratching. Logs/tree trunks are also good for sharpening claws.
- Stick to untreated natural materials wherever possible e.g. non-toxic paint, and ensure there are no sharp edges or places paws can get snagged or caught.
- Talk with your neighbours about your proposed design if built near a shared boundary.
- Contact your local council to ensure your proposed design meets local and state regulations.
- Include seating areas for you!



Catio resources

Websites that focus on the wellbeing of cats and creation of catios include:

www.geocatch.asn.au
www.safecat.org.au
www.catsafeathome.org
www.catiospaces.com
www.rspca.org.au
www.safeandhappycats.com.au
www.swccnrm.org.au



TOP 10 BENEFITS OF A CATIO

- 1 **Protect your cat outdoors** from vehicles, poisons, diseases, accidents or getting lost.
- 2 **Reduce vet bills** from cat fights, ingesting toxins or injuries.
- 3 **Protect birds and wildlife:** it's estimated that each roaming cat kills on average 110 native animals per year in Australia.
- 4 **Reduce roaming** populations and issues they cause.
- 5 **Provide a healthy outdoor lifestyle** with exercise, fresh air, bird watching, sunbathing, jumping, climbing and running.
- 6 **Reduce multi-cat issues** with increased territory and multiple options for some 'alone' time.
- 7 **Enrich cat and human companionship** by relaxing in shared healthy outdoor spaces.
- 8 **Reduce indoor odours** by giving outdoor toilet options.
- 9 **Good neighbour relations** are easy when your cat stays on your side of the fence!
- 10 **Peace of mind** knowing your cat is safe in a protected and secure environment.

www.geocatch.asn.au

This project is delivered by GeoCatch through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, in partnership with South West Catchments Council.



Cats
Love
Catios!

Catio Design Guide

The catio movement is growing fast.

More and more cat owners realise how many benefits catios bring to the lives of their feline companions, to the local wildlife, and to their own peace of mind.



Pets Away.
Possums
Play.



What is a catio?

A catio is a secure outdoor cat enclosure or "cat patio" for your cat. They are a great way of allowing your cat to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of the outdoors while keeping them safe and protecting our native wildlife. Cats are healthy and **puurfectly** happy in a catio provided it is designed to deliver mental and physical enrichment.



Covered catio

These can be either attached to an existing structure (house, garage, fence or shed) or free-standing. Before you affix anything to a boundary fence or wall it is important to gain support from your neighbours. The total containment gives you full peace of mind knowing your cat will not get out and wildlife cannot get in.



Photo courtesy: Katzone Enclosures



Photo courtesy: Katzone Enclosures



Open catio

These do not have overhead containment and rely totally on discouraging your cat from climbing over the property fences or walls, either using commercially bought 'paddles' that spin or inward angled netting. Wildlife (flying and climbing) can still access the catio so extra care should be taken with design and plant selection.



Photo courtesy: Oscillot



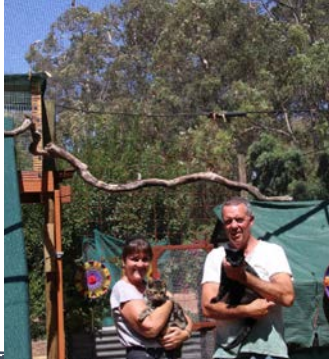
Photo courtesy: Oscillot

Indoor playground

Cats love high places and being able to observe life outside. Easy access to window(s) and viewing perches is important so they can engage with the sights, sounds, and smells of the great outdoors.

Enrich your catio

- increasing the area your cat can explore - introduce level changes and perches or raised walkways with observation decks and resting platforms.
- providing lots of choice - in bedding, scratchy surfaces (vertical, horizontal) and places to hide or explore (tunnels and boxes).
- including things your cat can sniff or nibble - cat grass is a must have item!



Creating a catio

There are endless commercial and DIY options for catios to suit all budgets, tastes and locations.

Things to consider to get started:

- Which part of the garden/house works best? Circulation, sun/shade
- How will your cat access the catio? Tunnel, window, door, wall cut
- What space and budget is available?
- How will you access the catio?
- Will you build it or get someone to install it for you?
- What construction style is the best suited to your situation?
- What materials and finishes for building and features are cat safe?



Construction

Catios range in size, shape and materials. From timber and wire window boxes to metal frame and mesh walk-in structures or expansive netted garden areas.

Key elements are:

- Access point(s) for cats
- Access/door(s) for humans For maintenance and use
- Frame - supports and/or wires
- Sides - mesh or netting
- Roof - mesh, netting or polycarb
- Shelving, platforms, poles
- Planting areas, lawn, pots
- Litter trays and mulch areas

Photo courtesy: Catio Spaces



Our catio is only limited by **your** imagination and creativity