

A fluffy grey and white cat is sitting on a pile of trash, including plastic bottles, paper, and other debris. The background is dark and textured.

5 cat items to toss right now

We all want to do the best we can by our kitties. But did you know some of the cat accessories you currently own might be better off in the trash? Read on to learn more.

1. Scratched-up litter boxes

Most litter boxes are made of plastic. One bad thing about plastic? It scratches. Your cat paws at the bottom of her box every time she uses it. The tiny scratches in the floor of the box may trap odor and germs. The next time you clean her box, check it for micro-scratches too. If you find some, it may be time for a new litter box.

2. Plastic bowls

Plastic is naturally greasy and easily scratched when it is a feeding dish also. Cats can suffer from feline acne, and it's possible that the greasiness of plastic bowls contributes to oil buildup and clogged pores on your cat's chin and face. Perhaps better not to chance it because it is difficult for your cat to sufficiently clean her chin anyway. Ditch the plastic bowls and use ceramic or stainless steel instead.

3. Toys in disrepair or covered in real fur

Toys that are damaged can be dangerous if portions are swallowed. And tiny, fur-covered mice can be a major hazard for cats. Cats are motivated by their strong prey instincts to chase and hunt the toy, and it's not a large leap to eat the toy if it is covered in real rabbit or mouse

fur. Many cats have ended up on a surgery table because of these "harmless" fake mice. Don't take a chance. If you have a tiny toy that is covered with real fur, throw it out!

4. Dull nail trimmers

Cats' claws may be sharp, but they are fragile, too, especially if you try to trim them with dull nail trimmers. Unless the blade is sharp, it will crush and fracture the nail and this is not comfortable for your cat. Holding still for you to trim the nails is hard enough! Don't make it twice as difficult and uncomfortable. Keep your trimmer sharp by changing the blade or replacing the trimmer regularly.

5. Expired or inappropriate medications

It might be tempting to save every medication you get for your cat, just in case you ever need it, but don't do it! Medications are prescribed for the specific cat and the specific problem at that time and might not be safe or effective for something else. Just because you are sure it is the same problem, it is much better to ask your veterinarian and be safe. Inappropriate medications are not worth the risk and expired medications can be downright toxic.