

LITTER BOXES IN A MULTI-SPECIES HOME

Dogs are scavengers by nature. They eat all kinds of things, including cat poop. Eating poop (the term for which is coprophagia) can be the result of a dietary deficiency or a way to relieve stress, but is often just the product of a dog's need to explore. Cat poop might smell gross to us, but it smells like cat food to your dog. A cat's diet is high in protein, which makes it particularly attractive to dogs. Unfortunately, eating poop carries the potential for dogs to contract harmful bacteria and parasites, and so should be discouraged.

CATS

Scoop as often as your cats go. The most direct way to dog-proof the cat litter box is to remove the temptation.

Raise your cat's litter box. Place your cat's litter box on a raised surface that only your cat can access.

Remove access to your cat's litter box. Put your cat's litter box in a separate room, inside litter box furniture, or inside other furniture accessed only through a door latch that opens wide enough for your cat.

Install a baby gate. A cat can either slink through the bars or leap over the barrier, but most dogs will be kept at bay. Some gates can be raised a few inches above the floor so the cat can slide underneath.

DOGS

Train your dog to ignore cat poop. As soon as your dog heads towards the litter box, call him to come and sit. Reward with a toy or treat.

Add vitamin supplements or a digestive enzyme to your dog's food. These will support proper nutrition absorption and assimilation.

Give bored dogs a better alternative. Provide your dog with a puzzle toy stuffed with a healthy treat. Peanut butter is especially good, because it'll stick to the roof of your dog's mouth and make him less likely to eat waste.

