



# END DECLAWING: TALKING POINTS

Hurts Cats, Hurts Cat Owners

Declawing has become so normal in the United States that you'll probably meet people who don't understand why declawing should be banned. Here are a few talking points to keep in your back pocket when you meet people who don't know that declawing is mutilation, plain and simple.

- Declawing isn't like a manicure or even just the removal of a cat's nails. It's a barbaric practice where the bones, tendons, and ligaments on a cat's paw are surgically amputated.
- Declawed cats can suffer permanent medical problems like pain in the paw, infection, lameness, nerve damage, and bone spurs.
- Declawing doesn't save cats' lives by reducing the number of cats in shelters. In fact, there's anecdotal evidence that declawed cats are more likely to end up in shelters because declawing can cause behavior problems like biting and refusing to use a litterbox.
- Declawing isn't acceptable in other parts of the world. It's illegal in most European countries, including Britain. In Israel, declawing can be punished with up to a year in prison.
- Declawing is almost never medically necessary. And when it is necessary, like when a cat gets cancer of the toe (a very rare condition), there's an exemption in these bans to allow for it.
- In a joint report, the Centers for Disease Control and National Institutes of Health said that they don't recommend that sick people or people with compromised immune systems declaw their pet cats.
- There are lots of humane, non-surgical alternatives to declawing that can help control a cat's scratching. But remember, scratching is natural. Cats were born with claws for a reason! Scratching helps cats stretch their muscles, mark territory, relieve stress, and keep their nails in good condition.



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