

East-West Animal Hospital
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Ways to Encourage Your Cat to Drink Water

Canned food is an excellent way to encourage water consumption because it is high in water content and most cats love the taste. It can always be warmed up in the microwave to enhance its smell for the fussy cat. Try to feed at least some canned food two to three times daily. You can also add water to the canned food. (Do so slowly.)

Provide fresh water every day. Cats seem to be very aware of the temperature and taste of water.

Make sure the water bowl is filled to the brim at all times. Cats have very sensitive whiskers and do not like putting their face into a bowl; a bigger bowl may be necessary.

Some cats do not like the taste of tap water. You might:

- Try refrigerating the tap water to improve its taste
- Buying a Brita filter
- Distilled water
- Bottled water

Try a few types and see what your cat prefers.

Some cats will drink more water if a drop or two of tuna juice (tuna in water or clam juice) is added.

Some cats enjoy ice cubes made from flavored broth (tuna or salmon juice mixed with water and frozen).

If your cat prefers to drink from a tap, make sure it can always get to the tap (don't lock it out of the bathroom if this is where it likes to drink). If your schedule permits, turn the tap on for the cat as often as possible throughout the day. Water fountains can also be purchased for cats that like fresh moving water.

Keep the food and water bowls away from the litter box area.

Keep the water bowl clean. Cats have a keen sense of smell and are easily turned off by odors on the edge of the bowl. Stainless steel and ceramic dishes are easier to keep clean and odor free verses plastic dishes.

Some cats seem to prefer a clear glass shallow bowl from which to drink. Experiment with different bowls until you find one your cat prefers.