

# HOW TO: GET RID OF CAT WEE STAINS AND SMELLS



## BACKGROUND

The feline kidneys have evolved an exceptional capacity to concentrate urine, a mechanism that has helped wild/feral cats survive in harsh desert environments. Cats being obligate carnivores also have high levels of lipid (fat) in their urine. The combination of cat urine's *strength* and *high fat content* means that the odour lingers – a helpful feature for a cat in the wild planning to leave their own personal mark to define their territory.

Unfortunately when cat urine somehow ends up in an inappropriate spot in your home or garden it can be really difficult to deal with. That stereotypical smell can linger for many months/years so unless every last trace is removed you could have long term issues with your cats, not to mention a smelly house!

Once a cat smells its own urine in an inappropriate area it may well take this as reassurance that it's OK to urinate in this or other areas around your home. In addition, any other cats in the household may also feel confused, threatened or anxious by a fellow cat's distinctive urine odour and may feel the need to replace it with their own urine mark.

Although equally unpleasant, in some ways it can be easier to remove traces of faeces than the lasting effects of cat wee.

Once urine finds its way onto a porous surface it can be the start of a vicious circle if early and appropriate action isn't taken to remove all traces of it. By this I mean to the standards of a fastidious feline nose – bearing in mind that their sense of smell is vastly more astute than our own! Masking it with other smells or chemicals does little to remove the underlying odour for a cat and some cleaning products can exacerbate the problem as they can actually mimic the aromatic components found in cat urine. For this reason AVOID the usual household cleaners (eg ammonia-based cleaners and bleach)!

## AIMS:

- **Decontamination** = remove as much neat urine as possible
- **Remove fat content & strong smelling chemicals** = enzymatic biological washing powder
- **Dilution** = rinse with water
- **Remove any residual fat** = surgical spirit
- **Remove residual odour/stains** = Urine-Off Odour & Stain Remover Spray 500ml
- **Break the habit** - Keep the cat(s) away from the area as long as possible (even if you have to rearrange some furniture to block access to the spot).
- **Be thorough with your clean-up** - as horrid as the task is, don't be tempted to cut corners - even the slightest amount of urine residue will make the rest of your efforts worthless!! Check all nearby vertical and horizontal surfaces including hard and soft furnishings and walls/skirting boards as some cats will stand and spray (even females!).

## CLEAN UP CHECK LIST:

- Rubbish bag - put contaminated paper roll straight into bag without touching/contaminating any other surfaces in the process
- Paper kitchen roll x 2
- Gloves
- Biological (enzymatic) washing powder
- Hot water
- Bicarbonate of soda *aka* Baking Soda (for carpets)
- Surgical Spirit (I can supply if needed)
- Spray bottle
- Urine-Off Spray – a professional strength odour/stain removal spray (I can supply if needed)

# STEP BY STEP GUIDE

## 1: Reduce the volume of urine

Remove as much urine as possible from the affected area. If the wee is on a carpeted area, soak up as much urine as possible without spreading it any further by pressing paper towel firmly over the affected area. If an item is washable (eg a blanket/duvet/bag etc) then try to rinse as much urine as possible from the affected area and squeeze out any residual water once finished – avoiding wetting the whole item as this acts to spread the smell.

## 2: Reach for the biological washing powder

**NB: WEAR GLOVES AND DON'T SPLASH NEAR YOURS OR YOUR PET'S EYES!!!**

NB: Always patch test an area first - this may not be suitable for wool carpets. Make a mix of biological washing powder and a small amount of very hot water to dissolve as much powder as possible. Then make up with warm water to until is like a nice bath temperature at a strength of 1 part washing powder to 9 parts warm water (ie a 10% solution). If the urine is on a carpeted area, then a plastic bucket or an old washing up bowl can be handy portable option or if you want to soak an item then a laundry tub or bathroom basin works well. If it's a large bedspread/duvet then I really do sympathize but filling a bath deep with the solution works best. Wash the affected area of carpet or immerse the affected area of the article into the solution. Leave to soak for 30-60 minutes. It is best to now wash the item as you normally would – if machine washable, try adding a cup of vinegar in addition to the usual enzymatic washing powder.

## 3: Rinse Rinse Rinse

Thoroughly rinse area – with carpets, this will involve firstly soaking up as much of the water/washing powder mixture as possible using paper towel. Then add fresh warm water to the area and again soak this up. You may need to do this a few times to get rid of as much of the detergent as possible.

## 4: Dry

For carpets, once the bulk of the water has been removed, you can apply a liberal amount of bicarbonate of soda to the affected area to draw out as much moisture and any residual urine smell as possible. Leave this on for 12-14 hours to dry. You may need to agitate the surface of the item/powder to allow the underneath to get contact with air. Once dry brush off powder and vacuum the affected area with the end of the hose to avoid spreading the powder beyond the area.

TOP TIP: I recommend the [Bissell Little Green Carpet Multipurpose Deep Cleaner](#) for a rinsing and removing moisture from carpets.

## 5: Surgical Spirit Spray \*flammable\*

Spray affected hard surfaces (eg walls, skirtings, floors) using surgical spirit in an empty spray bottle and allow it to dry – I strongly suggest that you patch test on an inconspicuous area first before use.

## 6: "Pee-dar" UV light & Urine-Off Spray Kit

This is the best thing I've found for initially locating the wee & then breaking down the odour-producing chemicals in it. Saturate the affected area with [Urine-Off spray](#), leave for 12 hours and rinse - as per instructions on the bottle.

NB: You may only need to do this once but in some cases you may need to repeat steps 2-6 on more than one occasion. Use the UV light to check for residual wee.

## 7: MOST IMPORTANTLY ... address WHY this happened in the first place!

Cats should have free and ready access to toileting facilities at all times so if indoors with no escape then need a litter tray. If this necessitates going outdoors then ensure access to an unlocked cat flap at all times.

### Questions to consider:

- **Did someone accidentally lock the cat flap/shut the cat in a room inadvertently?**
- **Have you changed the cat litter/style of tray recently?**
- **Is your cat elderly?** (Dementia & loss of learned behaviour, access issues associated with arthritis, lethargy/ill health can all present as inappropriate urination). Litter trays for senior cats can help reduce the chance of accidents occurring in the first place.
- **Any factors (stress) that may have interfered with your cat's normal toileting routine?**
  - Stress inside?
    - Renovations/DIY, visitors, babies, children, other pets, packing etc
  - Stress outside?
    - Building sites, bad weather (cold/wet/snow/ice), harassment from neighbourhood cats
- **Are there any litter tray issues?** Tray location, size, type and litter type all play a part. If you have multiple cats you should have one tray per cat plus one extra. Could you be scooping and cleaning them more often?
- **Does your cat need a vet visit?** Could they be urinating more often or larger volumes because of underlying health problems (eg diabetes, kidney/thyroid disease/cystitis/infection etc).