

The City of Marion recognises that cats make wonderful companions and that cats are beloved pets of many residents. The City of Marion also recognises that cats that are the uninvited visitors of neighbours can be unwelcome and cause a nuisance. There are many ways to deter cats in a humane way, but what might work for one cat may not work for another.

Try some of these, bearing in mind that you may need to try a few different ideas. For the below methods, it would be wise to allow at least a fortnight (2 weeks) trial to determine if it has been effective before trying a different method.

Before you try any of the following suggestions listed below, please ensure that the cat/s do not belong to a neighbour. If they do belong to a neighbour, we strongly encourage you to talk to your neighbour and try to resolve any issues.

Many people make the unfortunate mistake of trying to clean away strong smelling cat urine with disinfectants containing ammonia. Ammonia based disinfectants will attract cats to the area. It is better to clean the area with warm soapy water and try to combat the smell with another smell.

- Surround the area with a fence or chicken wire that leans in the direction from which the cat will approach. The cat will not be able to climb over the angled fence.
- Fit taut wire or string 5cm – 10cm above fence tops, this will make it difficult for cats to balance on the fence.
- Specifically designed strips of plastic spikes can be purchased and fitted on top of fences, shed roofs, etc. to prevent cats from walking on it.
- Place half full bottles of water in boarders around the area you are trying to deter cats from entering. The light reflection deters cats.
- CDs can be threaded on string with knots to keep them apart. String these across flower beds or hang in trees. The light reflection deters cats.
- Plastic spiked tree collars can be purchased to place around tree trunks to deter cats from climbing trees.
- Place a downward opening cone or a biscuit tin to the pole below a bird table to prevent cats climbing up it.
- Rubbing Vaseline or other grease based products on to smooth poles will also help.
- Place clippings from thorny or spiky plants or plant cacti or other prickly plants under bird feeders and under bushes to deter cats from using these areas to stalk birds.
- There is a garden plant, coleus canina, on the market. It markets under the names 'Pee-off' and 'Scaredy Cat'. This plant has a pungent odour that is said to repel cats and other mammals from the garden.
- Scent deterrents will either serve to repel (Renardine, Citronella) or mark a territory (Silent Roar).
- Alternatively, try orange or lemon peel, since cats are not keen on the smell of citrus.
- If the problem occurs mainly at night, painting some mouse traps black and carefully placing them upside down where the cats visit can also work. This method is particularly effective around the base of bird cages.
- Buckets of water or water pistols full of water will also help to chase cats out of the garden.
- An electronic deterrent works on a high frequency that is inaudible to humans and birds, while some other animals may hear it is specifically designed to be unpleasant to cats and to keep them away from specific areas. Being sound based, a cat with defective hearing may not be able to hear the sound and some cats, including the Siamese, appear not to respond.
- If you would like to avoid the expense of commercial repellents, this is a recipe that you can make up at home:

2 cups white vinegar	1 tablespoon whole cloves
2 or 3 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed	2 or 3 pepper (small skinny hot ones)
2 or 3 drops of concentrated dish washing liquid	Black pepper
Water to fill bottle	

Combine all ingredients in an empty two litre bottle, and leave mixture overnight. Fill a spray bottle and spray around the area that you wish to deter cats from. Keep the remaining mixture for later. You don't need to spray much to give the cats the hint. Just respray every week or two until they disappear. Be aware that this recipe has a very unpleasant odour, so do not spray in the house or near open windows, and do not spray directly onto the cats.

Source: Deterrents for use in gardens wildlife information factsheet (7/02) NSW

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