

DAY TO DAY CAT CARE

YOUR GUIDE TO A STRESS-FREE CAT CARE SCHEDULE



**DAILY
ROUTINE**

**MONTHLY
CALENDAR**

**ANNUAL
MUST-DOS**

Hello there, friends!

I'm your friendly internet cat lady here to tell you how to create a streamlined, elegant cat care calendar. If you're one of those organization addicts who's done everything from bullet journals to calendar blocking to old-fashioned to-do lists, you're going to love this scheduling guide.

Though I'm no stranger to the addiction to scheduling my work life, cat care seldom seems to make it onto my to-do list. As a result, I'm always running behind after an unexpected kitty mealtime or litter box cleaning. Incorporating those basic cat tasks into your routine helps you stay realistic about the amount of time you spend taking care of your cat and it ensures that you'll never forget to change out the litter or clean your cat's bowls.

An unexpected bonus is that the benefits of a well-plotted cat care calendar aren't only for you. Consistent routines are just as good for your cat as they are for you. If cats were people, they'd be ultra-uptight people with a tendency to go full hissy fit if their routine is altered.

If you think you panic when you get a last-minute dinner invitation when your to-do list said you needed to clean your basement, realize that cats are so sensitive they might ditch their litter box for the carpet if their schedule gets too weird. So de-stress yourself and de-stress your cat by creating a clean, organized, and genuinely species-appropriate cat care calendar.

I've broken down your cat care duties from daily routines to annual must-dos that you can plan both for the long term and the next few minutes of your day. At the end of this guide, you'll find a checklist for you to refer to anytime you like.

Your Cat's Daily Routine

Let's start on a small scale with tasks you need to do every day. Take these times as a general guideline and adapt them to your unique needs.

- **5:30 AM** - Cats naturally are at their most active just before dawn. In nature, this is when they'd head out on the hunt. Instead of getting mad at your cat for waking you up early, embrace the opportunity to try a
- **7:00 AM** - Before you head out to work or hit the slopes for a day of skiing or do whatever you do with your days, clean up that litter box! Cats need a fresh, clean litter box and it's important to scoop at least once a day.

new early-rising lifestyle. Who knows? You just might find yourself becoming healthier, wealthier, and wiser.

- **6:00 AM** - Indulge your cat's early-morning hunting instincts by playing with him for fifteen minutes in the morning. Playing doesn't have to involve a lot of effort on your part. Flick a feather wand while you brush your teeth, kick a rubber ball at your cat while you make your bed, point a laser pointer while you pour your pour over. A little bit of exercise and predatory behaviors make a big difference for your cat, both mentally and physically. Once you're bored and busy with other things, let your cat play alone.
- **6:15 AM** - It's best to brush your cat's teeth at least 30 minutes before or after a meal. Brush your cat's teeth using a toothbrush and cat toothpaste. You don't have to do it for three minutes. Just a little scrub is all you need to significantly reduce your cat's chances of developing periodontal disease.
- **6:45 AM** - Go ahead and pour yourself some cereal for breakfast, but please don't pour one for your cat. Instead, give your cat a meat-rich, high-moisture meal. After all that hunting this morning, only a carnivore's meal will do.
- **7:10 AM** - Wash your hands after cleaning out the litter box. While you're at it, wash out your cat's food bowl.
- **7:00 PM** - If you have time, you can give your cat three small meals a day, but in general, it's easiest to just give your cat two meals roughly 12 hours apart.
- **7:30 PM** - Wash your cat's food bowl after dinner. If you have a dishwasher, you'll probably want to put it in the dishwasher.
- **7:32 PM** - Clean out the water bowl and refill it with fresh water. Wash it by hand unless you have a second water bowl to put out while the dishwasher is working overnight. Make sure to rinse more than you think you have to.
- **9:00 PM** - Before you get tucked into bed, squeeze in a little more playtime with your cat. Again, this doesn't have to be hard. You can hold a laser pointer while you do some relaxing yoga or flick your favorite teaser toy while reading a book. Or, if your cat is fascinated by the lumps under the sheets, wiggle your feet around while watching your favorite series on the laptop.

Weekly Tasks

- Switch up your cat's diet as often as possible to avoid intolerances and keep his palate flexible. Go through a rotation of proteins, incorporating venison one week and turkey the next.
- If you're using a non-clumping litter, you'll need to change out your litter box once a week. Dump out all the litter box contents, clean the litter box with a non-toxic wipe or soap and water, then refill it with clean litter.
- Once a week, maybe on the weekend or during a movie night, brush your cat's coat. Regularly brushing your cat will help to keep his skin healthy and fur shiny. It also helps to cut back on shedding, so it's good for your house, too!

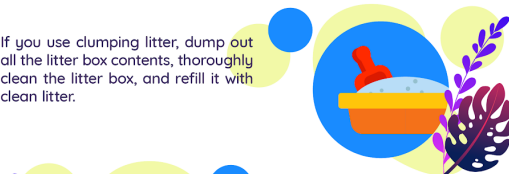
Every Week



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Every Month

If you use clumping litter, dump out all the litter box contents, thoroughly clean the litter box, and refill it with clean litter.



Trim your cat's claws. Combine this with your weekly brushing session and call it a spa day!



Check your cat's body for any changes — inspect teeth, eyes, ears, and abdomen for injuries or abnormalities. If you notice anything different, think about seeing the vet.



Weigh your cat once a month.



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- If your cat is a Sphynx or other hairless breed, bathe him once a week. Hairless cats get dirty and oily if they're not regularly bathed. Once a week is frequent enough to keep your cat clean but won't dry out his skin.

Monthly Tasks

- If you're using a clumping litter, dump out all the litter box contents, thoroughly clean the litter box, and refill it with clean litter.
- Trim your cat's claws. You can combine this task with your usual brushing session and think of it as your cat's once-a-month spa day.
- While you're giving your cat his spa treatment, check his body for any changes—inspect teeth, eyes, ears, and abdomen for injuries or abnormalities. If you

- notice any lumps or injuries, it's probably a good time to visit the veterinarian.
- Keep track of your cat's weight by doing a weigh-in once a month. Be sure to record the results so you can track changes in your cat's body.

Quarterly Tasks

- Wash your cat's bedding at least once every quarter. Washing your cat's bedding helps to control the buildup of bacteria, allergens, and it's essential in case of a flea infestation. Remove any loose hair with a vacuum, and if possible, remove bedding covers and pads, then wash them separately in the washing machine.
- While you're cleaning up his bedding, check your cat's toys and furniture for signs of wear. If anything's become loose, repair or replace it to keep your cat safe.



Annual Tasks

- Bring your cat to the veterinarian for a checkup once a year. It's recommended that you start taking your cat to the veterinarian once every six months after he's eleven to twelve years old. Senior cats are more prone to develop illnesses and frequent veterinarian visits let you catch them earlier.
- Have your cat's teeth professionally cleaned. You're brushing your cat's teeth every day, but there are some things a toothbrush and toothpaste can't handle. Unless you've been brushing your cat's teeth every day since he was a kitten, he'll probably have some plaque and tartar buildup that only a professional can remove.



Scheduling a once-yearly dental cleaning will ensure that his teeth stay clean and help to prevent periodontal disease.

- Remember to update your cat's microchip information if he's diagnosed with a high-maintenance condition or if you move to a new house.

A predictable schedule is a safe, reassuring foundation that makes everything else less scary.

Perhaps you've learned this while managing your own daily routine. The more you have going on, the more important it is that you stick to a strict schedule.

Scheduling a steady, repetitive routine helps to make cat care a no-brainer. When things get stressful and you have a lot going on, you'll never forget to take care of those little things you need to do for your cat.

A steady routine is particularly valuable for cats who are going through something stressful or challenging. It's also extra-beneficial for older cats. Younger kitties are accustomed to changes and can deal with a more flexible schedule, but older cats are extremely sensitive to routine. Sick cats, too, greatly benefit from a steady schedule.

Of course, the routine won't always be the same. You might go on vacation or spend a few days sick in bed, but you shouldn't ever forget the routine completely. When you go on a trip, try to keep things as consistent as possible for your cat.

To maintain the routine when you're away, avoid boarding facilities and instead leave your cat at home with a sitter, preferably someone who knows your cat well. You probably won't get away with asking your cat sitter to maintain a strict routine while you're not home, but you should make sure they understand the basics of your cat's routine, including meals, play, and litter box maintenance.

Resources for You

Plans only work if you follow through on them! Once you've created your cat care calendar, stick to it—a consistent, unchanging schedule is the only kind of schedule that cats love.

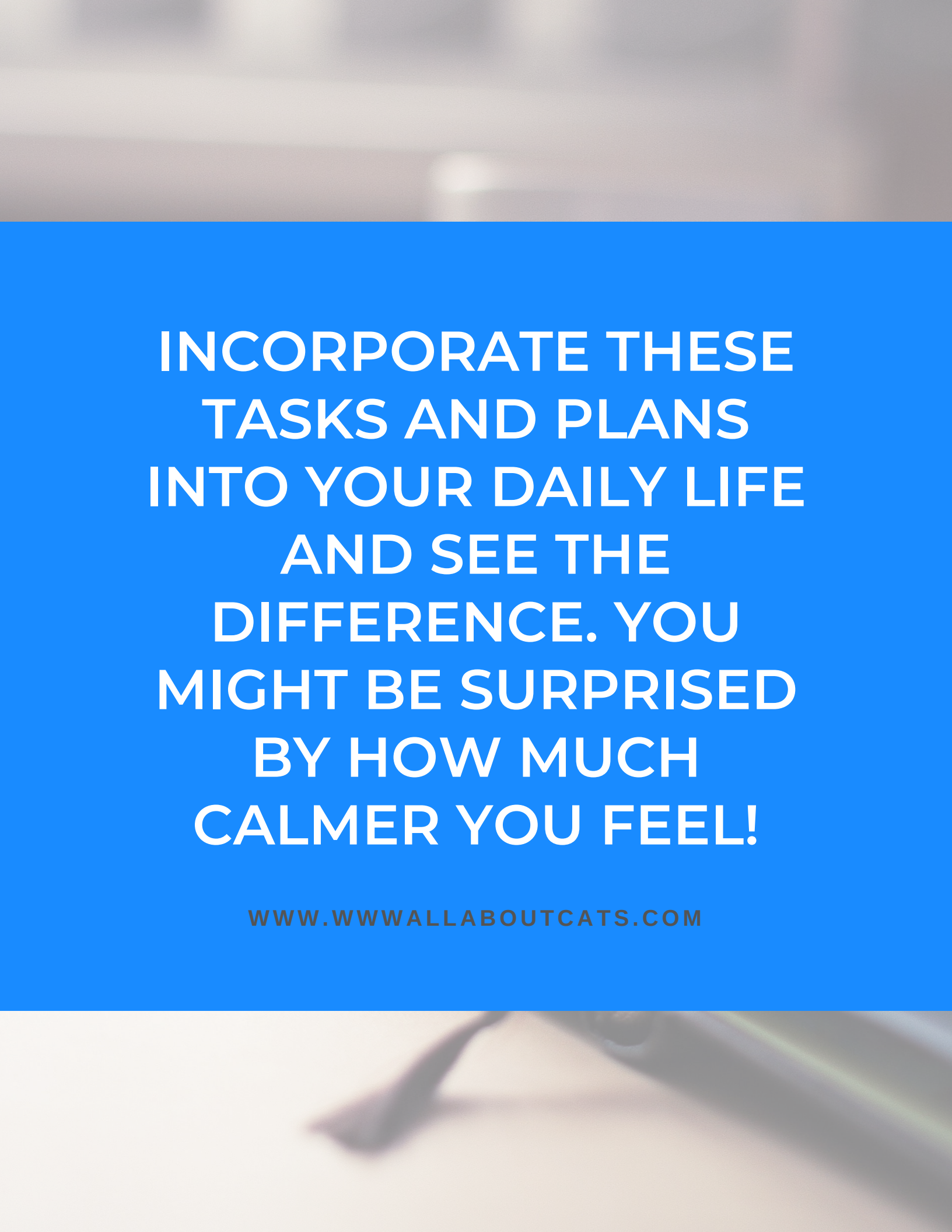
Here are a couple of resources to help you work a consistent cat care schedule into your life. Feel free to copy and edit for your personal reference.

Sample Daily Cat Care Checklist

- ☐ Play with Callie for 15 minutes in the morning
- ☐ Brush Callie's teeth
- ☐ Feed Callie breakfast
- ☐ Clean the litter box
- ☐ Feed Callie dinner
- ☐ Wash Callie's food bowl
- ☐ Wash Callie's water bowl
- ☐ Refill her bowl with fresh water
- ☐ Play with Callie for 15 minutes before bed

JANUARY 2020

			1 Weigh-in	2	3	4
5 Spa day, body exam	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Brushing day	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Brushing day	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 Brushing day	27	28	29	30	31 Refill the litter box	



**INCORPORATE THESE
TASKS AND PLANS
INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE
AND SEE THE
DIFFERENCE. YOU
MIGHT BE SURPRISED
BY HOW MUCH
CALMER YOU FEEL!**

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