CATS AND KITTENS:
Aggression Between Cats

Cats are very attached to their territory, and territory doesn't just mean land. It also means resources such as food, water, beds, perches, scratching posts, and toys. Cats are constantly staking their real-estate through scent marking with their many scent glands. When you see a cat rubbing his face on a piece of furniture, he's laying claim to it! Cats also mark their territory with their paws and their tails. Because cats have a hierarchy, the more confident cat may mark his territory to show lower-ranking cats he owns everything. Obviously, this can cause tension in a multi-cat household.

Here are some tips to help keep the peace in your home.

» Cats need things that belong to them and them only. Having multiple items will help ensure each kitty has something to call his own. For example, set up more than one litter box. Ideally, you should have one litter box per cat, plus one additional. Having varying perches around your home will also be a benefit. Place them in different rooms, at various heights, and select different styles.

» Try dispersing items that cats commonly mark as theirs, such as bowls, litter boxes, scratching posts. Place them in various areas of your home to make marking these items less convenient.

» Instigate play time! Play sessions are beneficial for so many behavior issues, including aggression between cats. A couple of play sessions daily will help your cats take the focus off each other and give them something entertaining to do. Encourage your cats to play in the same area. Laser pointers are great for this. You can easily engage all the cats at the same time and show them the positivity of being around each other.

» Make sure each of your cats (dogs too!) have some solo time with you. Do you have a shyer cat? Play with him or pet him without the other animals present. Having time when they don't have to share you with the other animals can be soothing for everyone.

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hsppr.org/resources

Humane Society
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