

# Sizing Up Cat Furniture

Select products that enable cats to easily scratch, perch and nap in seclusion.

Cats are born climbers and have an innate need to scratch and perch on elevated platforms.

"Cats are climbers in the wild," says Nicholas Dodman, BVMS, veterinarian and director of the Animal Behavior Clinic at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University "They live in what we refer to as a three-dimensional environment. Cats need to climb to fulfill their basic biological agenda."

No self-respecting cat has a desire to climb or scratch objects that teeter or move, or worse, topple over. That's why cats prefer to scratch on the sturdy arm of your sofa rather than an inexpensive 18-inch tall scratching post that falls over when pawed.

"The closer you come to what is natural for that species, the better that animal will feel and therefore, the healthier it will be," Dr. Dodman says. "There are lots of things people should consider in making the indoor environment conducive for a cat."

The goal during this month's product review was to evaluate items that blend into your home decor and satisfy the need of cats to claw, perch and hide. The products featured all scored high interest among the team of test cats and received solid marks from me for their design, price and functionality. Products were scored on a five-paw rating system with five paws representing the highest score. Our results:

## 3-Tier Cat Power Tower™

When the delivery box containing this product arrived, I wondered, what did I get myself into? I am apprehensive any time I need to assemble furniture, but fortunately, the directions to assemble the 3-Tier Cat Power Tower™ were easy to follow. Within an hour, I had accurately inserted the screws into the pre-drilled holes and had the tree erected and ready for testing among the team of cats. This product earned a five-paw approval rating.

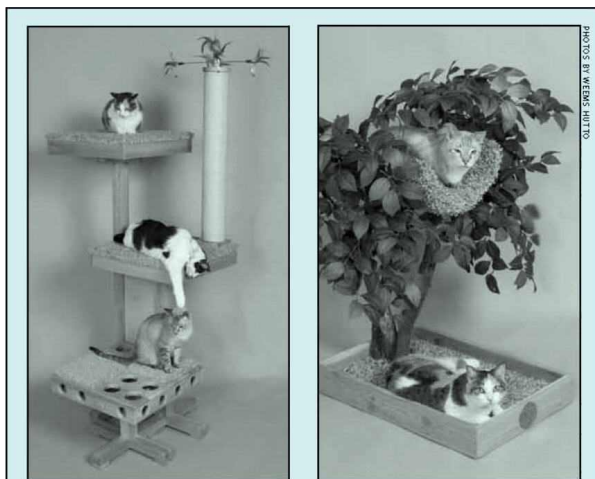
Fully assembled, this cat tree measures 56 inches high by 30 inches wide by 30 inches long. Add another 16 inches in height for the Power Post.

Its stained rubber wood is attractive and the tower features three 19-inch by 19-inch lounging platforms. The highest platform has a replaceable carpeted cover. The middle level functions as a weight switch that activates the elevated revolving cat toy. The lowest perch has a hunting hole platform with lounging pads. Treats and toys can be placed inside this pad to encourage play and foraging. For your cat's scratching pleasure, there is a 32-inch elevated sisal post that extends from the middle platform, and a double-sided sisal scratching board that mounts at the base.

Once it was assembled, the test cats immediately claimed the Cat Power Tower. They liked to scratch the round, elevated sisal scratcher, Most enjoyed playing with the static feather teasers.

This unit gave cats a choice of scratching material: sisal or carpet. Sisal won the popularity contest.

This cat tower retails for \$399.95 plus shipping from Wiser Pet Products. For more information, contact the manufacturer by calling 920-303-0685 or by visiting [catpowertower.com](http://catpowertower.com).



The 3-Tier Cat Power Tower™ earned the only 5-paw approval rating due to its ease of assembly, sturdiness and multi-level play stations.

Offering a faux foliage area and a sturdy platform, the Sprout Tree House is attractive and comes assembled.



All the test cats enjoyed napping in the Lazy Bonezz cat bed that earned a four-paw approval rating.