

Most cats are scared of fireworks, so how can you help to keep them calm

How to keep your cat as calm as possible during firework season.



Overview

Fireworks can be a frightening experience for cats, with studies suggesting at least one in three cats shows signs of fear around the loud noises and bright lights they emit. In fact, research has found that 6% of cats have been injured — with some even killed — during fireworks displays, sometimes in road accidents when attempting to escape.

It's also possible that a far bigger proportion of cats are scared of fireworks, as some may hide their fear in subtle ways their owners might miss. If your cat is fearful of fireworks, there are some [simple steps you can take to help them feel safer](#) and more comfortable during this noisy time of year.

Is your cat stressed, or scared of fireworks?

Signs of firework phobia include:

- Your cat is visibly startled by the noises
- Hiding or running away
- Going to the toilet in an unusual location
- Overgrooming
- Reduced appetite
- Pacing or circling
- General restlessness or change in demeanour

Stay home with your cat

Humans expect fireworks at this time of year, so they're not that big of a shock. On the other hand cats find them sudden, unexpected, and very unpleasant!

Your presence at home will help your cat feel a lot safer during this loud season. Think about missing the festivities and staying home with your cat instead. Or if there are several people in your household, it might be best for one or two to stay in and keep your cat company.

Secure your house at night time

Fireworks are unpredictable - especially if your neighbours are hosting their own event in the garden.

Make sure your house is fully secured so your cat can't escape. If they're frightened, they may try to run away – keep all doors and windows closed.

Make a hideout for your cat

Your cat will feel safer if they have somewhere comfy to hide. You could use their carrier, or even an old cardboard box lined with warm blankets.

In general, cats feel safer when they're high up. They like to be able to assess their surroundings and keep an eye on what's going on. If you can, store their makeshift hiding place somewhere high, like the top of a bookshelf.

Act calm around your cat

If you're flustered by the firework noises, your cat will sense it and it'll add to their fear. If you remain nice and calm, you'll act as a calming presence for your cat - which is a great help to them.

It's also important to let your cat come and go as they please. They might visit their hideout, then another hideout (under your bed, for example), then check in on you every now and again.

Let them operate in their own way, be there to provide cuddles and reassurance if your cat comes up to you, but avoid picking them up and smothering them as this may make them feel worse.

Provide some distractions

You can make the fireworks less noticeable by:

- Closing the curtains
- Turning up the TV or radio
- Playing loud music or background noise

It's also a good idea to take your cat's mind off the noises outside. To do this, provide food, treats and their favourite toys. Try [playing your cat's favourite game](#) to keep them busy!

Increased activity indoors will also help make up for the outside exploring your cat has missed during the evenings surrounding Bonfire Night.

The louder music or TV has been known to be successful a number of times for us

Get your cat used to fireworks noises

Although your cat may find fireworks really scary, they may be able to conquer their fear with a little help. Sound therapy involves playing fireworks sounds at home, slowly getting your cat used to them.

Start by playing audio of fireworks at a very low volume while your cat is calm. Keep the sessions short and give them lots of praise or treats when they stay relaxed. By taking it slow and being patient, your cat can become less anxious when real fireworks are going off outside.

Use a calming product

If your cat is exceptionally scared of firework noises, try giving them a calming product. We suggest [Vetpro: Stress & Anxiety](#) - it's designed by vets to help

both dogs and cats feel calmer during stressful situations, and reduces unwanted behaviour as little as one hour after being administered.

To get a better idea of the therapeutic products available and which one would be better suited to your cat, have a chat with your local vet.

Is your cat still anxious?

For further help and advice on how to calm an anxious cat, particularly during firework season, have a chat with your vet.

Medically reviewed by [Dave Tweedle, BVetMed MRCVS](#)