

# Plan your Catio for Spring

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~ by Cathy Fenton ~

On a Sunday afternoon in April my husband and I were in the family room watching TV. Our kitty C.C. was indoors and kitty Willow was on the patio off the family room in her harness attached to a 20 foot lead. The door was open so she could come in and out of the house at will.

As always I would check every 5 minutes or so to see where Willow was and make sure she was OK. Imagine my shock when I looked out the window and saw a coyote 20 feet away from Willow! She had her back to the visitor and was totally unaware she was being watched. I yelled, and my husband and I ran out the door to the patio as the coyote ran down the hill and out of sight. That was the last time C.C. and Willow stepped outside for the next 4 days. The following day we bought supplies to build a cat enclosure, and construction commenced on Tuesday morning.

- The enclosure consists of 2x4s made of pressure treated wood, with stucco wire attached to the outside of the 2x4s.
- One wall of the enclosure runs along the house, with an existing window providing entry and exit for the kitties.
- A gate along another wall allows us to enter and exit.
- There are 4 sitting/sleeping platforms including two that are connected by a ramp. The platforms are of varying lengths and heights, and all are 11 inches wide built by joining two 1" x 5.5" pressure treated boards.
- The platforms are covered in inexpensive area mats cut to size and stapled in place. There are also a couple of mats on the concrete floor to cushion the kitties' feet as they jump from window ledge, platforms, or the 5 ft high scratching post/sleeping area that sits along the wall of the house.

The enclosure encompasses part of an existing garden area, so I have added several butterfly ornaments for colour and two small garden boxes which hold cat grass and palm plants for the kitties to munch on. I have also added a folding canvas chair as I find it very relaxing to sit in the enclosure with our fur babies, reading or bird watching with them.



The peace of mind the enclosure has given us knowing our kitties can be outdoors whenever they want but in the safety of their own space is priceless.

