

## Scent of the Day - Cats

The following has been adapted from material on the [ASPCApro.org](https://www.aspcapro.org) website

When incorporating this enrichment activity, it's as easy as introducing a different scent as part of your daily kennel cleaning. You can include the bottle or shaker of the scent of the day on the cart with your kennel cleaning supplies.

You can also use a designated enrichment cart or container such as a tote or plastic carryall that contains the various enrichment items for the kennels as well as a copy of your enrichment schedule.



Check out warehouse stores to obtain extracts and spices in bulk sizes.



You can also try aromatherapy extracts and oils, but be sure to research these carefully before using them in the shelter. Some aromatherapy substances are irritants or even toxic to animals (although more likely to affect cats than dogs).

See [Smell/Olfactory Stress Reduction](#) for scents used to elicit calming behaviour

### Materials:

- Spray bottles and containers with shaker tops
- Cooking extracts, such as vanilla, peppermint, almond, coconut, etc.
- Sweet spices, such as cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, cardamom
- Lavender leads the list of other scents claimed to confer a benefit, along with valerian and honeysuckle

### What to Do:

#### 1) Prepare the scents

- Assemble as many spray bottles as you have liquid extracts.
- Fill each bottle nearly full with water, and then add a small amount of extract, and mix. Remember that cats have a keen sense of smell, so the concentration of extract can be very small.

- If you have dry spices, transfer each to a container with a shaker top.
- 2) In each kennel, after cleaning, lightly spray a toy, or paper wad, with the diluted extract. If the scent of the day is a dry spice, sprinkle very small amounts on bedding or toys

If you find that some scents are not well received, remove them from the rotation, and try something else. If individual cats do not interact with certain scents, or display aversion toward them, you can record this on the enrichment schedule.

**A final note:** Be mindful of the effects that residual cigarette smoke, perfumes, or other scented personal products may have on cats. Recall the last time you were in an elevator with a liberally scented individual and spare the cats that trauma.