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# Tips to keep cats safe around Christmas trees

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November 30, 2015 11:38 am • by Wilda Lyons / Coalition for Pet Protection

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A beautifully decorated Christmas tree has long been a tradition for the holidays. The ornaments, scent, and colors are appealing to all, including your family's feline. What can a cat person do so they can enjoy this holiday tradition, but also keep their beloved cat safe?

Sora Wondra, an expert at [petcarerx.com](#), says there are many things to do and look for to keep your cat safe from holiday dangers. These also can apply to dogs and small children.

To keep your cat from walking under the tree, and be tempted to climb it, place items with unpleasant textures under the tree. These can be aluminum foil, pine cones, sticky surfaces such as double-sided tape, or bumpy ones like a upside-down rug with non-slip backing.

Do not let any animal drink from the tree stand. Any additives to the water can be deadly. There is also a risk of fire with a dried-out tree. Keep the water reservoir filled and covered with the tree skirt.

Cats are curious creatures, and may find the electrical cords great toys. To protect them from shock, cover the cords with approved products, and unplug when the lights are not in use. Avoid putting breakable ornaments near the bottom of the tree. Instead of glass ornaments that can break, consider felt, paper or wood ones.

Do not use tinsel; if eaten, it can cause severe digestive system problems. Also skip using poisonous plants such as poinsettias, holly and mistletoe.

Keep the tree upright by using a sturdy tree base. One can also use fishing line to secure the tree. To create another layer of safety, repellent, yet safe products can be used. Most cats hate the smell of Vicks, apple bitter and citronella. These can be either sprayed on the tree before the lights are added, or applied to cotton balls, or pine cones. Orange peels or a citrus potpourri can also be put around the base of the tree to deter cats.

If your feline is a kitten, acrobat, or just a super inquisitive, hard-to-deter cat, consider placing your tree in a room that can be closed off. Also do not place a tree near jumping-off platforms such as couches and tables.

Give your cat an early holiday present -- and distraction -- with a new scratching post, cat condo or a special toy. Something new can be a great way to entertain your cat and save your sanity.

Some of my cat friends have also resorted to artificial trees. A good friend told me they put their tree up in November, then decorate it a month later. At that time, the tree was not that interesting, and the ornaments remained untouched.

Coalition for Pet Protection, founded in 1992, is a local animal welfare organization. CPP is a 501(c)(3) organization, and all donations are tax-deductible. CPP offers assistance with feline medical care, and has an animal food pantry with food for dogs and cats.

CPP members will be at the SouthPointe Petsmart from noon to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19 with stocking stuffers available for sale, along with a raffle for dinner and a movie. Check out our Facebook page, website, [www.petcoalition.org](http://www.petcoalition.org) or call (402) 434-7922 for more information.

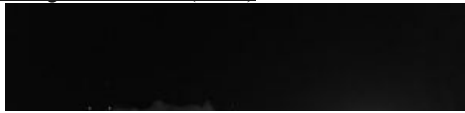
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