



Tips for Socializing a Playfully Aggressive Kitty

This kitty is what we call playfully aggressive, or an inappropriate player. That means that he/she will use claws and teeth in play. While this is a normal cat behavior, we don't want to encourage them to play by biting and scratching. So, you can help them learn by using interactive toys that offer the cat a "challenge" and provide an outlet for natural, predatory energy.

- Always use a toy such as a braided rope or feather wand. This keeps the cat's teeth and claws a safe distance away from you. Make it move like a mouse, bird, or a snake to mimic prey and stimulate the cat's natural hunting behaviors.
- If the cat's teeth or claws touch your skin the game should end, and you should give the cat a "time out." After about 30 seconds, give the cat another chance to play. This helps the cat learn that the game will continue as long as he plays appropriately and doesn't use teeth/claws on your skin.
- Never try to pet the cat during play. The cat may think that you are continuing to play, with your hand becoming a new toy in the game. This can lead to you being bitten or scratched.
- Before ending your session, always take a few minutes to "cool down." Start moving the toy slower and slower before finally stopping the game completely. Sit and talk to the cat, without any petting right away. This will ensure that the cat is not overly aroused when the next socializer enters the room.