



# Smart solutions to protect the house from pets at home alone

**What happens to owners' homes when they leave their pets alone? What can be done so the hours of separation do not result in a destroyed home?**

## Three approaches

Products should utilise three different and complementary approaches, to help pet parents manage their pets when left alone and protect their homes in the best way: behavioural, chemical and environmental.

### Behavioural

Educating consumers about normal pets' behaviours is key to improving pet and pet parents' relationships and overall wellbeing.

Solutions to cats scratching is one of the most developed sectors of home protection. There are a few ingrained reasons for cats scratching, from stretching and removing outer layers of claws to marking territory. To prevent damage there is now an overload of solutions available, in unique hip designs and styles, that can even be applied to the legs of the table or to the sides of the sofa.

To prevent animals from acting out natural or nervous habits, the best option is to keep them off the furniture and there is an array of solutions available, varying on the basis of customers' training preferences. Large objects that prevent access, mats that are uncomfortable to lie on, mats that make a deterring noise, or – controversial – mats that give a small shock when touched.

Alternatively, there are sprays, not only for furniture but applicable for an area or surfaces where owners would like to deter pets from being. They have active ingredients ranging from cinnamon oil to pepper. Other sprays have bitter tastes to prevent chewing: an instinctive behaviour that calms pets and reduces stress. Pets alone naturally vent their discomfort by chewing objects around the house, especially objects most impregnated with the owners' scent.

### Chemical

Animals link the passage of time without their owner with boredom and anxiety that takes the form of destruction. A unique option for pet parents is the use of an environmental diffuser, formulated with calming pheromones, that creates a comfort zone. Traditionally pheromones play a calming and binding role between mother and baby, however the ability to receive the pheromones through the vomeronasal organ is also maintained in adulthood. Used as a long-term therapeutic tool, pheromones are easy to use and have no side effects. It is necessary to emphasise, however, that pheromones are a complementary treatment, which must be connected with overall training.

### Environmental

It can also work to set up a pet zone in a dedicated area of the home. This can be achieved by having a space with bedding and toys aided with gates, doors, and pens, which are now designed to fit all styles and preferences. Technology also continues to innovate the category and helps create more home integrated options that allow us to manage pet gates and flaps remotely, via radio-frequency identification.

In conclusion, there is a variety of smart solutions to protect the home, furniture and furnishing from the loving but impetuous coexistence with pets. Everyday more options appear, with less compromise between aesthetics and functionality. ♦



**Marta Murelli and Monica Ferrigno**

monica@ildoppiosegno.com  
ildoppiosegno.org