

Trimming your cat's claws is the humane answer to declawing. Start with a relaxed, sleepy cat, sharp clippers and a good light source, for best results. Regular human toenail or fingernail clippers work well, as well as guillotine-type cat clippers. **Difficulty:** Average **Time Required:** 5 minutes

Here's How:

1. Support your cat securely in your arm left arm with his front paw in your left hand. It may be easier at first to wrap him in a towel with only the paw extended. I find it very easy to do while my cat is just relaxing on my lap
2. Press gently but firmly on the pad area to extend a claw. It isn't necessary to squeeze hard. (You may want to practice steps one and two a few days in advance of the actual trimming, to be sure he's comfortable with your handling his paws.)
3. Examine the claw closely under light to find the pink area in the center called the 'quick.' This is a blood vessel, and will bleed if nicked.
4. Holding the clippers parallel to the flat part of the claw, quickly snip off the tip, being careful not to cut into the quick.
5. Give kitty a treat and a few kind words for being such a good cat. The more relaxed you and he both are, the easier the process will be.
6. Repeat the previous five steps until you have finished the first paw.
7. If your cat is comfortable and compliant, continue until the nails on both front feet have been clipped. Usually, trimming the back toenails is unnecessary, and undesirable, if the cat is allowed outdoors.

Tips:

1. Keep a barber's styptic pen or styptic powder handy in case you accidentally cut into the quick. If this should happen, apply the powder to the nail to stop the bleeding, and call it a day.
2. It may be easier if you have a second person holding the cat. Above all, it's important that you and your cat both be relaxed.
3. If at any time your cat becomes anxious, stop immediately. You can do one claw every day, if necessary.
4. If all else fails, ask your veterinarian to demonstrate the procedure for you, or schedule your cat for regular nail clips by a veterinarian or groomer. Most vets will perform this service for a minimal charge (mine charges \$10).

What You Need:

- Nail clippers
- Styptic powder/pencil
- Towel
- Reward treat