

How To Get A Ferret To Use A Litter Box

What can a ferret owner do if their ferret wants to use a corner of the room for its business instead of going back to the litter box?

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Posted: May 1, 2008, 5 a.m. EST

Q: My beloved ferret, Fannie-Mae, tends to go beneath the sofa, loveseat or chair in the living room to "do her business," usually in one particular corner. I have to constantly move the furniture and clean up the mess and steam clean the area. I can't keep Fannie-Mae condemned to her cage all the time, but this is her usual place when she is out and about. Why can't she just go back to her cage and use her litter box? I leave the door open when I let her out to adventure around. Is there any kind of deterrent or something I can use on these areas to decrease her usage?

A: Ferrets have a mind of their own. Try thinking like a ferret for a moment, and you'll realize that going to the bathroom puts your ferret in quite a vulnerable position. I know I would be unhappy if someone tried to open the bathroom door when I wanted privacy. Because of this, ferrets normally relieve themselves under the sofa, in corners and in various dark spaces.

The only deterrent I can suggest is vigilance on your part. Ferrets go to the bathroom quite often, so monitor Fannie-Mae when she is out. Every hour or so, depending on Fannie-Mae's needs, place her back in the cage or in a litter box. Also, make sure she uses the litter box before she comes out to play. If possible, place a litter box in the corners or under the furniture so when she goes there, she can use the litter box.

Imagine Fannie-Mae as a toddler playing outside. It's quite challenging to stop her fun and games and go all the way back to the cage to use the litter box, especially when she sees a perfect spot really close by.