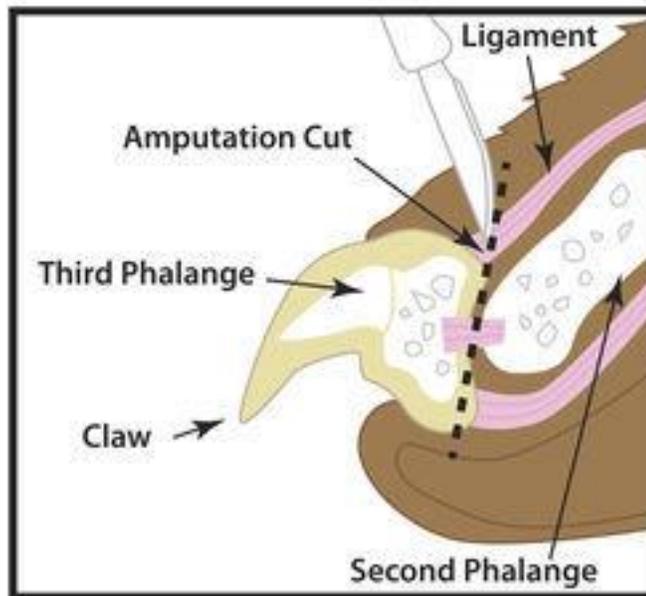


## The Cruellest Cut – declawing cats

The surgical procedure, known as an onychectomy, involves amputation of the final segment of toe bone as well as the attached claw and can have numerous long-term complications, including chronic pain, bleeding, lameness, arthritis, aggressiveness and nail regrowth.



***More than a toenail: The equivalent of declawing in humans would be cutting off a finger at the last knuckle mark.***

Most pet-friendly nations already outlaw onychectomy. The United Kingdom's Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons deems the procedure "not acceptable" under most circumstances, and laws in most European countries explicitly prohibit it. Yet in the United States, declawing is still a common — and lucrative — part of the veterinary business. A surgery that's now considered too barbaric for wild animals is widely marketed in the US.

In more than 90 percent of the cases, pet owners request the surgery on a cat's front paws (and sometimes all four) because of concerns about Fluffy scratching the furniture but it is an excruciating and unnecessary procedure that's fraught with complications and mutilates cats. In many cases, declawing can lead to much more problematic behavior than scratching furniture — including biting and a refusal to use the litter box.

There are many alternatives to declawing a cat – cats should always be provided with a scratch post where it is ok for them to scratch (which is their way of filing their nails) Most cats will naturally use their scratch post, once encouraged to do so. You can also encourage them to use it using catnip. In addition, there are various products, which can be found at your local pet store, that can be used to make your furniture less appealing.

Please research other options before inflicting a cruel and barbaric procedure on your cat. If your furniture is more important than your cat's wellbeing, you may want to reconsider whether a cat is for you.