

What Do They Do All Day?

Home Life

lifeStyle



It's a question that every owner asks: What does my cat do all day when I'm not home? The obvious assumption is sleep, because when you return hours later, your cat is curled up in the same position as when you left.

But is your cat really sleeping all day? What are the chances that it has a secret life and simply gets back into sleeping mode the moment it hears the key turn in the lock?

When I got a call asking if I was interested in testing the latest surveillance equipment and playing I Spy on my cats, I jumped at the chance.

The home-monitoring system camera's roving eye gives owners the unique opportunity to really see what their pets do all day. Because it's wireless, there's nothing for a pet to trip over or chew. It also offers the option to remotely switch on lights in case you unexpectedly have to work late.

I decided to install the equipment in my daughter's Los Angeles apartment because she travels a lot, and this would give her the opportunity to check in on her tabby cat, Isabella, no matter where she is. The system can link to any computer via an Internet connection, which means that I can spy on her from my computer, too. It's also cell phone-compatible, depending on your service provider. All it takes is a password, a couple of clicks and real-time video feed highlighting what's happening on the fur front.

My opening shot showed tropical plants blowing gently in a fan-created breeze. Then suddenly,

New equipment lets owners 'spy' on their cats.

through the foliage like a cat emerging from the jungle, Isabella appeared on screen and headed straight for her food bowl.

It looked like she was enjoying a leisurely breakfast. She ribbled, tanked up on water and had another ribble followed by a bath and forepaws manicure.

Next, she took off and patrolled the apartment. It was almost as if she was checking to ensure that nobody was home because she then headed over to the kitchen and spent a long time staring up at a countertop, which was declared a No Cat Zone from day one. When she stood up on her hind legs for a closer look, I was ready to press the button and freeze-frame the shot for "evidence." But instead, she dashed off into the kitchen and out of camera range.

What happened in the kitchen stayed in the kitchen because a long time later she re-emerged with what I detected to be a cat-that-licked-the-cream expression and stopped by her food bowl again en route to her favorite bed for a snooze.

I guess if you really want to see what goes on from the feline perspective, you're going to have to go one step beyond a home surveillance system and install a kitty cam on your cat's collar. This device from German inventor Jürgen Penthold consists of a lightweight camera that takes a photograph every minute for up to 48 hours and is available now in the United States.

Penthold attached one to his cat only to discover that not only does his feline have a secret life outside the home, but he also has a girlfriend that he visits every day!

"Surveillance" equipment can be put to good use outside the home too — in pet hotels and in animal hospitals, so anxious pet parents can see for themselves how their pets are doing.

I still am monitoring Isabella and that kitchen counter, waiting to catch her red-handed jumping up to explore. ☐



New electronic equipment lets you keep an eye on your cat's antics when you're not even home.

By Sandy Robins

Sandy Robins is an award-winning pet-lifestyle expert who appears regularly on TV radio and in international publications. She is an obsessed pet owner to her cats Cali and Fudge.