

How to Use an Ultrasonic Cat Deterrent

How they work

Ultrasonic deterrents emit an infrared field. When a cat enters the field, the device gives off a shrill, high-pitched sound that is inaudible to humans but highly annoying to cats. Some cats immediately avoid entering the protected area while others take a day or two before they leave. More territorial and dominant cats may require up to two or three weeks before they tire of hearing the irritating noise. Usually only cats who are deaf or otherwise hearing impaired do not respond.

Types of devices

There are multiple products available with a variety of features and at different prices. Some have strobe lights or alarms people can hear. Others can be set to deter numerous types of animals, not only cats. Some can be plugged in, some are solar-powered and have rechargeable batteries, and others use regular batteries. Certain products are designed not to disturb birds. Which is best suited for you depends on your budget and goals, but simple models that operate on normal batteries can be effective.

Coverage

When choosing a product, it's important to know its maximum area of coverage and make sure it matches your needs. Coverage is determined by two variables: (1) the distance the infrared field extends from the front of the device and (2) the range the field extends from side to side. For example, a product which emits a signal 25 feet forward with a range of 90 degrees would offer coverage similar to Figure 1.

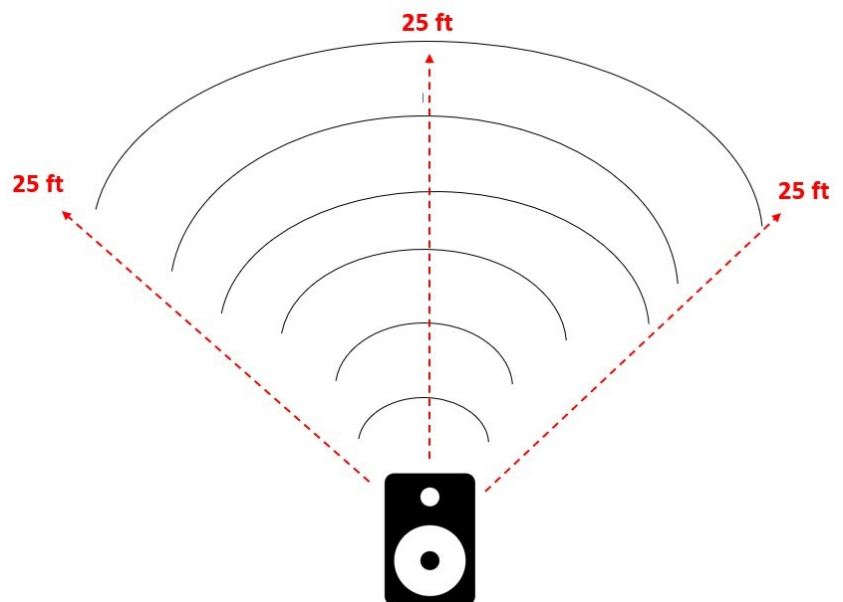


Figure 1

Placement

In most cases, the sensor of the ultrasonic device - the part which emits the infrared field - should be 4 to 12 inches (10 to 30 cm) above the ground, equaling the approximate height of a cat. Placing it 8 inches (20 cm) high is a good rule of thumb. If the device is mounted on a stake, check that the sensor is at the correct height after the stake is placed in the ground. Some devices can be mounted on a wall, fence or similar structure. Again, make sure the sensor is elevated about 8 inches. **The device will not work if it is placed too high.**

Position the device so its sensor is pointing towards the area you are trying to protect. If the area you want to deter cats from entering, such as your back yard, is larger than the maximum area the device can cover, you will need to use more than one device. **The device will not work if the area to be covered exceeds its capacity.**

If you are using a solar-powered device, place it where it will receive the most sunlight and avoid putting it in the shade.

Other tips

If your device is able to deter multiple kinds of animals, set it at the sound frequency for cats (read the manufacturer's instructions on how to do this.) If the sound frequency is set too low or too high, it may not work. Usually the setting for cats is towards the middle of a device's range of frequencies.

If there will be a lot of activity in the area the device is covering, such as dogs or children playing or someone gardening, switch off the device until the activity is over to increase its battery life. Otherwise, it will constantly be triggered on. Check and replace non-rechargeable batteries regularly.

Creative placements

Some users have reported success with the placements described below.

1. Point of entry or path of travel

Point the device at a spot where cats usually enter the property, such as a hedge or opening in a fence (Figure 2). Or instead place the device so it covers part of a path the cat normally travels.

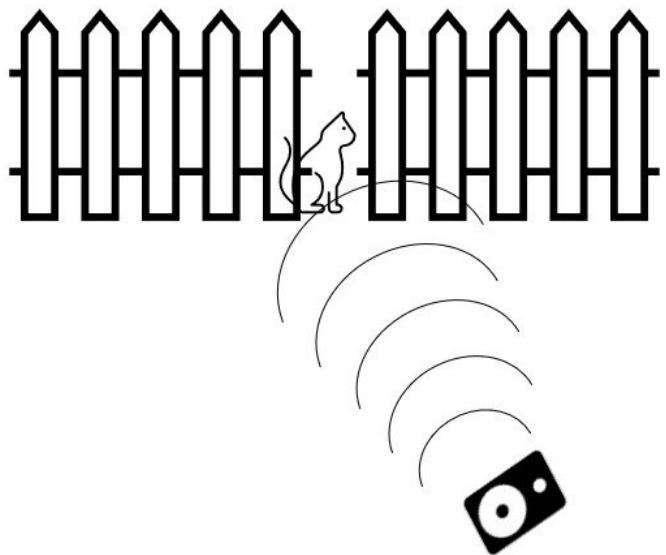


Figure 2

2. Boundaries

Take two devices and place one at each end of a boundary line, then point them towards one another (Figure 3). One or the other will be set off when a cat approaches or crosses the line. Don't place the two devices too far apart, further than their fields extend.

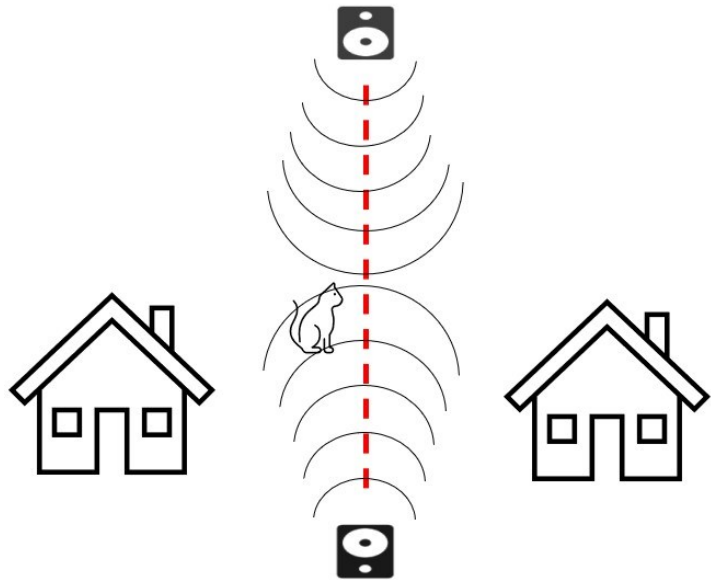


Figure 3

3. Parking space

Mount the device above a parking space, such as up on a garage, and point it down so its infra-field will cover a car parked below (Figure 4). This may help keep cats off a parked car.



Figure 4

Where to buy

Ultrasonic cat deterrents can be purchased online (for example, on Amazon) and can be found at many home improvement and hardware stores. Check buyer ratings of products and be sure to compare prices.