

WHY YOU DON'T WANT TO DECLAW A CAT

The declawing process is actually a painful and permanent alteration – some would say mutilation - of a cat's paw.

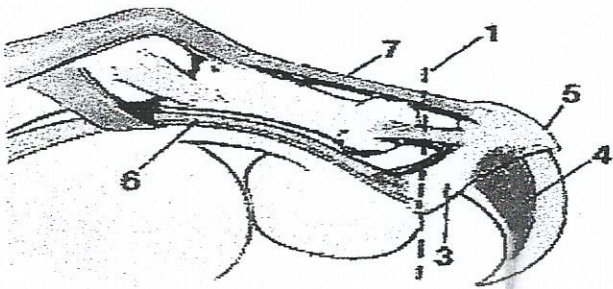
A cat's claw isn't like a human toenail: it is both retractable and adhered to bone. The declawing process is actually the complete amputation of the claw and the attached bone.

Declawing procedures are performed by scalpel, laser surgery, or, most often, using an instrument that operates like a guillotine. The device cuts straight through the last joint of the cat's toe with a sliding blade, removing the claw and bone right at the joint. The procedure also removes a portion of the paw pad, the protective tissue on the bottom portion of the paw.

Simply put, declawing a cat is akin to cutting off a human finger at the top knuckle.

Cats are digitigrades; rather than walking on the flats of their paws like most mammals, they get around by walking on their toes. After a cat undergoes the declawing procedure, they must walk, jump, paw, and perform many of their usual activities on their toes – in essence, on healing surgical wounds.

The recovery process can be quite painful for cats. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, cats can experience chronic pain or lameness weeks after surgery.



See the dotted vertical line? The area to the right of that line is severed when a cat is declawed.