

DESIGN & DECORATING

Take Back Your Decor

Dog making a mess of your house? Cat got your rug? Design pros to the rescue.

By NINA MOLINA

I UNDERSTAND the pet-owner's decor dilemma. When my roommate and I fostered two kittens, a toxic cycle began. Though our new friends knocked framed posters off the wall at night, the next morning Betty and Brontë's innocent eyes would disarm me and I'd drop kisses on their tiny foreheads. But must "fur babies" condemn a homeowner to tarp-clad sofas and plastic vases? No, say pet-owning interior designers.

Best camouflage?
A sofa that matches your pet's coloring.

Carpet Correctly

New York designer Ghislaine Viñas's tip: Roll out dark-colored rugs with intricate patterns to hide slobber, mud and piddle accidents. Jaipur Living's Poeme design would pass Atlanta designer Cate Dunning's "meatball test," which asks: Would a meatball dropped on the rug disappear? If so, bring on the paws.

Thick, natural weaves like wool and seagrass weather house-training accidents well. Avoid sisal, says New York designer Bunny Williams.

Though handsome and textured, it easily absorbs moisture, making spot cleaning a chore, she says. Performance materials such as polypropyl-

ene hold up well, says Keren Richter, principal designer of Manhattan firm White Arrow, but she steers clear of viscose, a delicate semi-synthetic material prone to shedding.

Up Your Sofa Game

Pets' claws catch easily in loose weaves like bouclé, and cats especially can't resist them. Richter tests a textile's suitability with a paper clip. Unfold the metal and run the jagged end against a fabric. If it snags, the material won't survive a cat's talons. Mohair and velvet pass this test, the designer has found.

Nicole Fuller's two Maine Coons, Monty and Punk, besieged her herringbone linen sofa, "hanging from it by their claws," she said. The New York designer reupholstered the couch in Dedar's Klein blue cotton velvet—tightly woven and durable.

As for leather, cats' claws will shred it, but paw marks and the oil from dogs' coats can be passed off as "patina."

Viñas endorses performance fabrics for upholstery as they "ensure the highest level of durability." Sunbrella offers solution-dyed acrylic that repels water and stains and holds up against the oil and dirt from dogs' coats, says Richter. Fuller, who finds some performance fabrics too rough, relies on luxurious European outdoor fabric from Loro Piana and Pierre Frey.

For shedding fur, Richter suggests the ultimate camouflage: a sofa that matches your pet's coloring. "Some-



OY VASE Reggie perches perilously near a ceramic amphora, as seen in 'House Cat,' (*Thames & Hudson, Jan. 2024*).

times, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em," she said.

Alternatively, Williams tucks throws into armchairs and wraps sofa cushions in blankets. After years with her cat and two terrier mixes, she's found that faux fur blankets and cotton block-printed Indian fabrics endure, wash easily and appear intentional.

"Make sure that it still looks like a chair that someone can sit in and not just the dog's

chair [or sofa]," Williams said.

Make Little Moves

Fuller collects Murano glassware and loves lit candlesticks. Uncompromising, she presses Stick-Um putty to the bottoms of both so her cats can't topple them. Richter deploys museum gel, a special adhesive, for wobbly curios.

Plants can be hung out of reach of digging dogs and mischievous cats, says Gera-

dine James, author of "Cool Dogs, Cool Homes" (*CICO, 2023*). If you like your plants earthbound, the website Plants for Pet Parents sells plants the ASPCA deems not toxic to pets.

As for the slew of chew toys, corral them in a container that compliments your interior—whether that's a folksy gingham-lined basket or IKEA's mod dandelion-yellow wire bin.

ANIMAL HOUSE
PET-FRIENDLY BUT PRETTY FURNISHINGS



Orbit Peacock Plant, Medium, \$32, PlantsForPetParents.com



Small Pet Bowl, \$35, NickeyKehoe.com



Risatorp Wire Basket, \$13, Ikea.com



Poeme Rug, \$190 for 4 feet round, JaipurLiving.com