

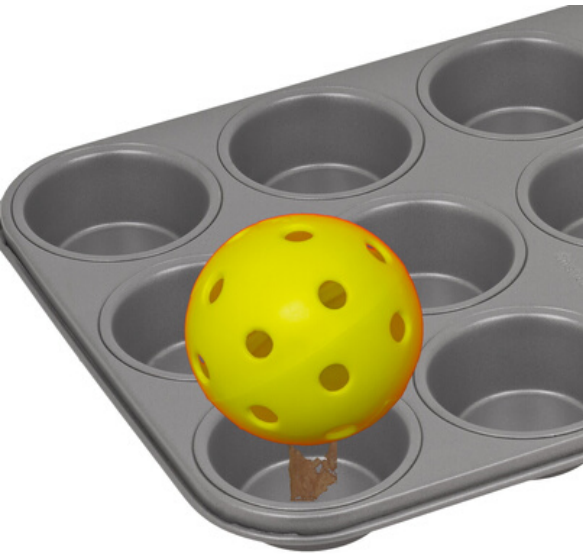
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to do with your cat in



Your regular lab partners may be at school, but you can **UNLEASH SOME SUPER SCIENCE** with your favorite feline!

## Tuna Trap

Your cat wants dinner, but you are comfy on the couch and not in the mood to get up. Kitty tries rubbing against your legs and purring. No luck. He tries a meow. You still don't get the hint. He moves to a loud YOWL! A few yowls like that and you're willing to get up, just to stop the noise. Next time, he'll know that loud yowling is the way to go. That's learning. You can test your cat's ability to learn by giving him a puzzle and seeing if he can solve it faster with practice.



### Instructions:

- 1) Show your cat a clump of tuna or another smelly treat and place it in one of the holes in the muffin tin.
- 2) Time how long it takes your cat to move the ball and get the tuna.
- 3) Repeat the process three more times. Record how long it takes to get the tuna each time.
- 4) Compare the times. If your cat was faster on his second, third, and fourth tries, it shows that he learned how to extract the tuna quickly.

### The Science: Try, Try Again

Your cat has to discover, step-by-step, how to reach the tuna. He might try pushing down on the ball with his nose, trying to bite through the ball, or looking to you for help. Eventually he'll use his nose or paw to push the ball aside. When he sees the same setup again, he has to remember: of all the things he did last time, which one got him a chance to chow down? By the third or fourth time, he'll know what to do. Scientists call this learning by trial and error. Your cat doesn't care what you call it. He's only in this for the treats.

