



Kitten Care Guide

Thank you for adopting a kitten from P.A.W.S. Here's a list of important things to keep in mind about having a new kitten & some additional resources.

Kittens need...

- To sleep somewhere that they feel secure (this might be a box or crate with soft blankets to begin).
- To toilet somewhere- a litter box and litter that is scooped and changed regularly.
- To eat kitten food (wet & dry) for their first year of life. When you first take your kitten home, try to feed it on the same food it has been used to, as long as it is on a suitable complete kitten diet. A sudden change of diet, combined with the stress of adapting to a new home, can cause stomach upsets and diarrhea. If you want to change to new food, do so gradually, over a period of 3-7 days. Start by initially mixing in a small amount of the new food, then gradually reducing the old food.
- To drink fresh water. Change water at least 1 x per day.
- To scratch. Get a scratching post if you don't want your furniture to be scratched. Scratching is normal healthy behavior for a kitty. You may also consider regularly clipping your kitty's claws. This is typically an easy, painless process for the kitty. Here's a link to a YouTube video on how to clip claw (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3aMxh4G9DM>). DO NOT CLIP BEFORE WATCHING! Please note that you can use a regular human fingernail clipper. Never declaw a cat! If your cat accidentally gets outside, your kitty has no way to defend itself.
- To Play. Make or buy safe toys! Your hand is not a toy!
- To be loved and handled. Kitties take differing amounts of time to adjust to their new environments. During the first couple of days any handling should, ideally, take place when the kitty initiates it. Do not try to force interactions.
- To be slowly introduced to other pets. See guides "Meeting a Resident Cat" and/or "Meeting a Resident Dog"
- To be kept healthy. Find a good vet and keep up on annual vaccinations.
- To be kept safe:.



Here's some indoor hazards and tips:

- o Washers, driers, stoves, fridge, irons, toilets (keep lid down), heaters, small gaps and holes, paper shredders (turn off between uses)
- o Toxic indoor plants and cut flowers (lilies are highly toxic, plus at Christmas time poisonous holly and mistletoe berries may fall off and be eaten.
- o Washing powder, cleaners, bleaches and disinfectants: some disinfectants are highly toxic to cats.
- o Sewing equipment: kittens are fascinated by cotton. Playing can easily lead to swallowing thread and needles, so tidy away carefully.
- o Wires and cords: some kittens like to chew wires with risks of electrocution, ingestion and strangulation. Use cord-tidies to remove temptation.
- o Cords on blinds and net curtains can also become tangled around kittens.
- o Open windows and balconies.
- o Garage hazards: all spillages should be cleared up and any anti-freeze containing products must be locked away as these are highly toxic and can be attractive to drink.

Here's some outdoor hazards and tips:

- o Hazards include catching a deadly infectious, being injured or killed by another animal, being poisoned, being injured or killed by a vehicle, getting stuck inside a building, car, etc., getting fleas, ticks, and worms.
- o Because there are many hazards outside for a small kitten, your kitten should not be allowed outside until at least 8 months of age.
- o If your cat is going to be going outdoors, be sure they are fixed, keep them up to date on vaccinations, bring them indoors at night, and apply a flea, tick, and heart worm prevention product (more info).