

Caring for a kitten

Although getting a kitten may be a particularly attractive proposition because of their playful and endearing personality, taking on a young cat also is a big responsibility.

Finding a kitten

Pedigree kittens:

- Be prepared to find a breeder and pay a substantial amount of money
- To find a suitable breeder you can contact the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy (GCCF)

Non-pedigree kittens:

- Most animal welfare charities will ask you to make a donation towards their running costs
- Advertisement boards in your veterinary practice or a local newspaper
- It is NOT a good idea to obtain a kitten from a pet shop as they often carry diseases and can be very stressed
- Try to see a kitten with its mother and siblings

Choosing your kitten

If you get a kitten who is already carrying a disease, they may never recover full health and the treatment may be expensive.

A healthy and happy kitten will:

- Have clear bright eyes, clean nostrils and ears, a shiny coat and have a good body condition, but be NOT pot-bellied
- Be active, playful and comfortable with people

Information to find out

- Whether the kitten has been vaccinated. If so, make sure you have a vaccination certificate signed by the vet
- Whether the kitten has been treated for fleas or worms. If so, treated with what and when
- What sort of food the kitten has been eating – avoid changing the diet suddenly

Necessary equipment

- Carrying box
- Food and water bowls
- Food (a complete kitten diet)
- Comfortable bed
- Litter tray with litter
- Toys
- A grooming brush or comb

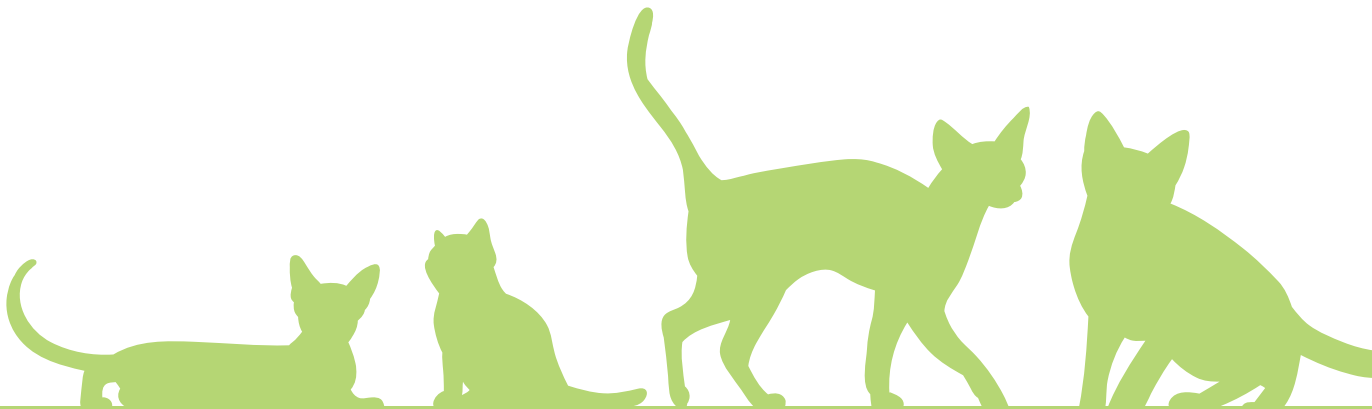
Settling in

- Your kitten will need plenty of love and attention until they settle into their new home
- Show your kitten the litter tray and their feed/water bowls that should not be too close to the litter tray
- If there are young children in the house they must not become overexcited or treat the kitten like a toy
- All doors, windows and cat flaps should be shut and the kitten should not be allowed outside for at least 2-3 weeks, until they have completed all of the necessary vaccinations
- Until your kitten is fully protected, they should only mix with cats who are fully vaccinated and known to be healthy. If you have other pet cats or a dog, introduce the kitten gradually



Further care

- Cats should be neutered at six months of age. However, some females can be fertile at five months old
- Arrange to have your kitten neutered promptly to avoid health problems and unwanted kittens
- Kittens must be wormed on a frequent basis every four weeks until six months of age – older cats may be wormed every three to four months
- Your kitten needs the first course of vaccinations as well as an annual booster vaccinations
- Regular daily grooming for long-haired cats is highly recommended to keep their coat in good condition and is easier if your kitten is used to it from an early age
- Your vet may be able to supply you with a finger toothbrush that is often easier to use with cats
- The eyes and nose of long-haired breeds or persian types may also need to be wiped occasionally with damp cotton wool
- Register your new pet with a vet as soon as possible and visit the practice to get advice on routine health care and neutering before any problems develop



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