

Kittens

Felis catus

Introduction and Origin

Cats make wonderful pets. They tend to be less demanding and can easily adjust to a variety of lifestyles and living spaces. Every cat is a true individual, so it's important to take the time to choose a four-footed friend who's right for you. A cat's personality, age, and appearance, as well as the kinds of pets you already have at home, are all things you should keep in mind when making your selection.

The nose pad of a cat is ridged in a pattern that is unique, just like the fingerprint of a human

The History of cats' relationship with humans is as old as civilization and stretches back over 9,500 years. Cats have figured in the history of many nations, are the subject of legend and are a favorite subject of artists and writers.

Settling in your new Kitten

When you first bring your new kitten home, it is a good idea to have one area in your house set aside as a "safe haven" for them. This is usually a bathroom or laundry that can be closed off so the kitten feels secure. Make sure your kitten's bed is soft and comfortable – preferably something they can climb into for warmth and security. Place this in one corner of the laundry/bathroom and then set up and situate the litter tray where the kitten can see it but not too close to the bed. Place a bowl of water and a bowl of dry food close to their bed. Close your kitten in this room to let them settle before slowly introducing them to the rest of the house and other family members, including other pets.

Kittens have loads of energy when they are awake so be sure to have a good supply of toys handy for them to play with. Don't let your kitten get away with things like attacking curtains, digging up pot plants, or scratching furniture as these are hard habits to break once formed. Positively reinforce good behavior and try to prevent the naughty behavior by using repellent sprays on furniture and plants, and providing a good scratching post sprayed with catnip spray.

Diet & Water

A well balanced diet is essential for the needs of a growing kitten and a premium dry food will ensure your kitten gets everything it needs to grow up strong and healthy. These are a complete diet so simply place the recommended daily amount (as per the guide on the back of the packet) into your



kitten's food bowl and leave this for them to eat throughout the day.

Kittens do not need to drink milk, leaving a fresh, clean bowl of water is sufficient.

If introducing any new foods, do so slowly and in small amounts so it does not upset their stomach. As your kitten gets older raw chicken wings and necks are good for them to chew and clean their teeth on but NEVER cook them and always supervise. A good diet will play an important role in your kitten's quality of life, especially in its senior years.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is not usually a major issue when it comes to kittens as most have been taught to use a litter tray by their mother. If, however, this isn't the case, simply place your kitten into the litter tray after they have eaten, when they wake up and when they start to wander after a play. Always clean or replace the litter daily as a lot of kittens aren't happy to use a soiled tray. Litters range from basic clay litter to recycled paper pellets, to different clumping varieties, so talk to the team at Kellyville Pets as to which litter will best suit the needs of your kitten.



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Worming and Flea Prevention

The easiest way to worm your kitten is either with an allwormer tablet, spot-on or paste and should be given every two weeks until twelve weeks old, then monthly until six months, and then every three months for the rest of their lives. Worms can cause problems such as diarrhoea, pot belly, and depression, and if the infestation is severe it can be fatal.

Fleas are not only very annoying for you and your kitten but can be quite dangerous as they can cause severe anaemia and allergies. While there are a lot of products on the market, not all of them are safe for use on kittens so always read the instructions. Topspots are probably the easiest and among the most effective and to prevent reinfestation be sure to clean all bedding regularly and treat your house and areas.

**Learn more
from the team
at Kellyville Pets**

Vaccinations and De Sexing

Kittens need to be vaccinated at 6 – 8 weeks old, 12 weeks old and 16 weeks of age, then continued yearly to be protected against Feline Infectious Enteritis, Feline Respiratory Disease and Feline Leukemia.

It is strongly advised to get your kitten de-sexed at around six months of age, as this creates a cleaner and more content cat. This will prevent any unwanted pregnancies, cancers such as prostate and mammary cancer developing and will make your kitten less likely to roam and get into fights.

Microchipping and Registration

By law, all kittens need to be micro-chipped and registered. The microchip contains a number which, once the new owner fills in the appropriate paperwork, gets put into a database with ownership details. A lost cat can then be reunited with their owner once scanned, revealing the owners details. Your kitten also needs to be registered with your local council but you have until they are six months of age as it is a cheaper lifetime registration once they are desexed. Putting a tag with your contact details on your kitten's collar is also required by law and will increase the chances of your kittens return.

Grooming

While kittens are extremely clean animals that

spend a lot of their day grooming themselves, you may still wish to bath them. If you do, be sure to start them at a young age so they can adapt, and always dry them thoroughly. Ears should be cleaned weekly and nails trimmed regularly. Long haired kittens should be brushed daily to prevent knots and matting, while short coats need only be brushed once a week.

Indoor or Outdoor?



It is highly recommended to bring up your new kitten as a completely indoor cat. The benefits of keeping your kitten indoors outweigh any negatives. Keeping your kitten indoors helps keep the birds and wildlife in and around your house and garden safe from your feline predator. Your indoor cat is also safe from fatal encounters with cars and trucks, and from getting into fights with other cats and dogs in their neighbourhood. Your kitten will be more than happy to sit at a window or doorway and watch the world safely. You can always put a harness and lead on your kitten and take it for a stroll in the garden – they'll love it! Keeping an indoor cat also helps strengthen the bond between you and your kitten.

Further information on diet, hygiene, worming, vitamins, Vets and much more is available from the team at Kellyville Pets.

At Kellyville Pets, we encourage responsible pet ownership.

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