

Feeding tips for cats

- **Find out how much your cat weighs.** The easiest way to do this is using your bathroom scales. Weigh yourself first (you don't have to tell anyone). Then pick up your best friend (your cat) and weigh both of you. Subtract your weight from the both weight to equal the cats weight.

For Example: I weigh 80kg and we both (cat & I) weigh 84kg.
 $84\text{kg} - 80\text{kg} = 4\text{kg}$. My cat weighs 4kg.

If you don't have bathroom scales or your cat does not like to be picked up, you can see if your pet food store or vet has scales that you can use.

Knowing what your cat weighs is very important. The amount of food he needs is based on how much he weighs. Also, worming tablets, frontline, heartworm tablets etc are all measured on how much your cat weighs.

- **Measure out how much food your cat needs.** All foods have a recommended feeding guide based on the weight and age of the cat. It is usually measured in cups or grams. Sounds easy enough but how many different size cups do you have in your kitchen, and are your kitchen scales accurate? When you use a cup, make sure it is 250ml. You might be surprised at how small a standard cup really is. Pick a cup and use that just for your cat food.

If you don't have a cup, you can usually get one from your pet food store.

Measuring your cat's food is very important. You need to know how much your cat should be eating. If you feed too much, your best friend will gain weight and you will be wasting money. If you don't feed enough, your cat will lose weight and be hungry. Hungry cats will go searching for food and will eat more next time you feed them (more on this is regular meals).

- **Keep lots of clean, fresh and cool water available all the times.** Your cat needs access to lots of good water all the time, but especially when they are eating. Dry cat foods are designed to be eaten with water. The water helps to soften the food and start the digestion process. Also, the food swells up when water is added, triggering the stomach to say when it is full.
- **Feed your cat one regular meal per day** (kittens need 2-3 meals per day). Decide on a time of the day (say 7am) as the feeding time for your cat. Feed your cat only at this time and allow 10 -15 minutes to eat all his food. Older cats may take more time, younger ones less. Once finished remove the bowl and any food left over. Establish the habit of feeding once per day when they will eat all of their food.

This allows you to monitor their eating habits. Not eating is the first sign of lots of problems so it is important to know if that happens. Cats that are able to graze all day long could have a problem that cannot be detected as quickly. This is also particularly effective strategy for cats that like to stray, as they will always be there at 7am to get fed.

Feeding tips for cats (cont'd)

Remove leftovers. Food that is left out will attract flies & ants, at the least. Cane toads will also appear for a free feed as well as birds and chooks. The neighbourhood strays will be happy for a feed hurting your back pocket.

- **Reduce the amount competition your cat faces to get fed.** If you have more than one cat to feed, feed them at the same time, but in separate locations. The best of friends will be more aggressive if they feel they have to compete for food. They will also eat more than they need to in case they lose the next battle. Make sure the neighbour's dogs and cats are not around to compete with yours for food.
- **Buy 10 get 1 FREE.** Eukanuba & Iams dog foods have a rewards program for feeding your cat their highest quality products. After buying 10 bags of food, your next bag is absolutely free. This is a great program, but trying to keep track of receipts and then send it in to claim that bag, can be tricky. At Citifarm @ Kelso and Len's Feed Shed, they take care of all that for you. They keep record of your purchases and give you the free bag. They put the receipts together and claim it from the pet food company. It's brilliant.
- **Worm your cat every 3 months.** Hopefully your cat uses a litter tray, or the same garden bed for all their poo, and licking each others butts is how they say Hello! So it is so important to keep up with intestinal worms. Untreated worms make your cat feel real crook and you don't want to be feeding the worms as well as the cat. Not all wormers are the same and many claim to be all wormers and don't do all worms. Drontal is considered the best in the industry and these tablets need to be given every 3 months (more for kittens).
- **Cats love bones too!** Cats love bones because they are tasty and they keep them occupied. Cats will spend ages licking, chewing & breaking them up, as well as hiding them in the garden for a rainy day. Cats prefer smaller bones like chicken necks & wings, and small roo tail bones. Taken straight from the freezer, they make a great ice block on a hot summers day. Be careful though, you should not feed cooked bones (particularly chicken) as they become brittle and can splinter and hurt your cat. Roo tail bones are very popular, so popular they can sometimes be hard to get hold of.
- **Chocolate should never be fed to cats as it can be fatal.** Do not feed the following: onions, garlic, chocolate, coffee or caffeine products, bread dough, avocado, grapes, raisins, sultanas, currants, nuts including macadamia nuts, fruit stones (pits) e.g. mango seeds, apricot stones; fruit seeds, corncobs; tomatoes, mushrooms; the one type of fish constantly, cooked bones; small pieces of raw bone or fatty trimmings.

For all your Cat Food products and help using them:

Citifarm @ Kelso
3/1463 Riverway Dr
Kelso, Qld 4815
Ph 4789 3868
www.citifarm.com.au

or

Len's Feed Shed
1 Mt Kulburn Dr
Jensen, Qld 4818
Ph 4751 5500
www.lensfeedshed.com.au