

HOW MUCH DO CATS COST?



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Article checked by a vet

Bringing a kitten or cat home can be a delightful experience for yourself, your family and your new feline friend, especially as there are many [health benefits of owning a cat](#). However, cats are a long-term financial commitment and there are many [things to consider when getting a cat](#), including how much a cat or kitten is.

Whether you adopt from a shelter or purchase from a cat breeder, there are several other costs of owning a cat including a cat bed, food bowls, litter trays, carrier boxes, toys and treats, as well as recurring costs such as food, vet bills and pet health insurance.

In this article, we break down the costs of all essential items and bills, and look at price ranges between budget, mid-range and luxury options. By understanding how much a kitten or cat costs, you can make an informed decision before welcoming a cat into your life.

How much does it cost to buy or adopt a cat?

How much a cat costs depends on whether you adopt from a shelter or purchase from a breeder. By adopting a kitten or cat, you are giving them a much-needed loving home, whereas buying a cat from a breeder is usually if you want a specific breed. Your choice will likely be influenced by your preference and budget.

Adopting from a shelter

With the UK cat population on the rise, due to unneutered cats producing unwanted kittens, there are thousands of cats currently in shelters waiting for homes. By adopting from a shelter, you can rehome a cat in need and provide them with the love and affection they desperately deserve.

Cat shelters may charge adoption fees which can range between £50 to £150, depending on the cat's age, breed, and whether or not they have already been vaccinated and neutered/spayed. Adopting from a shelter can be a truly rewarding experience, and could work out cheaper than buying from a breeder.

Buying from a breeder

There are professional breeders who breed specific cats to produce offspring with similar and predictable characteristics in order to maintain the desirable traits of cat breeds, including their appearance, size and behaviour. Some people have certain preferences, depending on their own personality, and therefore may want to choose what kind of cat they bring home. How much a cat costs varies greatly as price is at the breeder's discretion, but it can cost anything between a few hundred to thousands of pounds, depending on the breed. Kittens can be much more costly than adult cats, due to higher demand.

Purebred cats vs mixed-breed cats

Purebred cats may be more ideal for some people who are looking for specific traits. For example, you may want a cat with a calmer temperament as opposed to an overactive kitten. Or if you're living in a smaller flat, you may want a cat that is likely to settle well as an indoor cat. However, purebred cats can be at risk of genetic diseases, so it's important to research the breeds you like and consider this in your decision.

Mixed breed cats have not been selectively bred, and so they have a variety of characteristics. This means they can be more unpredictable in terms of appearance and temperament, and therefore may not suit some people. For others, this may be preferable due to each cat being more unique with its random genetic makeup, and mixed breed cats cost less than purebred cats.

It is up to you as a cat owner whether you choose a purebred or mixed-breed cat, as both can be excellent companions. Ultimately it is best to choose a cat that is suited to your lifestyle and environment, although considering rehoming a cat from a shelter can be very rewarding.

Total monthly and annual cost of owning a cat

The cost of owning a cat depends on your cat and their needs, as well as your choices for them as a cat owner. Below is a breakdown of how much owning a cat costs, with monthly and annual totals. We have provided a price range so you can see the cost of budget items compared to luxury items, with mid-range falling somewhere in between.

Our calculations are based on 2023 prices, which may be higher than previous years due to the current cost of living crisis. The annual cost has been worked out by multiplying the monthly cost by 12. Please note, the calculations below are only a rough guide, and you may see fluctuation in prices, depending on your location, brand availability, promotional offers and whether or not you choose to buy in bulk, which can be more cost-effective.

Type	Item	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost
Cat Food	Wet Food	£20-£75	£245-£905
	Dry Food		
	Treats		
Vet Bills*	Vaccines	£10-£20	£120-£240
	Check Ups		
	Flea/worm Treatments		
Other Essentials	Cat Litter	£2-£30	£24-£360
Total		£32-£105	£360-£1255

*We discuss the monthly costs of vet bills in more detail [here](#).

One off costs of owning a cat

Besides the initial cost of bringing a cat home, there are many other upfront costs for essential items that affect how much a cat costs. How much you choose to spend on each item depends entirely on your choice, requirements and, of course, budget. For example, you can either purchase stainless-steel feeding bowls for your cat, or you may want to splash out on an automatic feeder to dispense dry food throughout the day, especially if you spend long hours away from home.

The list below details the one-off costs of owning a cat, and we've provided lower and upper price ranges. It's important to remember that some of these items will need to be replaced in your cat's lifetime, due to general wear and tear, and the cost of replenishing items has not been included. You can look at our complete [checklist for getting a cat](#) to make sure you're fully prepared for your new addition to the family.

Type	Item	From £	To £
Essentials	Feeding Bowls and Accessories	£2	£200
Essentials	Litter Tray and Accessories	£2	£100
Essentials	Collars and ID Tags	£1	£15
Essentials	Carriers and Travel	£15	£50
Essentials	Grooming Tools	£5	£10
Optional	Cat Furniture	£5	£100
Vet Bills	Vaccines	£50	£200
Vet Bills	Neutering/Spaying	£40	£110
Vet Bills	Microchip	£20	£30
Total		£140	£815

Breakdown of monthly expenses for owning a cat

Monthly cat food costs

In the UK, there is a huge variety of cat food brands available. Whether you're on a budget,

looking for something mid-range, or spending more on luxury items, you can usually find something suitable online or in your local supermarket. Sometimes it can work out cheaper to buy in bulk, so consider this when shopping for your cat. Whichever brand you choose, make sure it is a [complete and balanced cat food](#), which has been tailored to deliver the nutrients your cat needs for its age and lifestyle.

Item	Budget	Mid-range	Luxury
Wet Food (2 pouches daily)	£18.20	£30.33	£66.73
Dry Food (1 kg)	£1.75	£3.50	£6
Treats (per bag)	50p	£1	£2.50

Monthly vet costs

Vet bills can vary, depending on which vet you choose and if they offer a monthly health care plan. Health care plans enable you to spread the cost of routine services, such as flea and worm treatments, annual boosters and health checkups, across the year. Here, we provide the average UK prices for monthly healthcare plans.

Check with your vet to see if they offer a healthcare plan and what is and isn't included. The cost of neutering and spaying your cat is usually not included, but you can find the average price ranges for these procedures in the [one-off costs table](#).

Type	Item	Cost
Monthly Vet Bills	Check ups Flea/Worm Treatments	£10-£20

Monthly pet insurance costs

There are various monthly pet health insurance plans available, which vary in prices depending on the amount of coverage provided. Some insurance plans cover accidents only, whilst others provide lifetime coverage. Whichever you choose, it's a good idea to have some form of pet insurance to help with costs in case of any accidents or health problems which may require vet treatment.

Item	From	To
Pet insurance	£5	£50

Cats are wonderful companions and are truly worth the investment. It's important to consider upfront, monthly and annual costs of owning a cat, to make sure you're able to make the financial commitment for your new pet. Besides your shopping list, there are other measures you'll need to put in place before [bringing a cat or kitten home](#) to make sure they feel welcome, safe and comfortable.

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