

Clone of Bringing a Kitten Home

Welcoming a new cat into your home is an exciting, emotional time for both you and your new family member. You may be nervous about how your new cat or kitten will adapt to an unfamiliar environment and new faces. It is also natural for your new furry friend to feel some anxiety while transitioning from her former home to yours. Preparing for this joyful occasion in advance will help you and your cat relax and begin to enjoy each other right from day one. In this article, we recommend practical considerations to help make your new cat's arrival in your household a positive, happy experience for both of you.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR NEW CAT FEEL AT HOME?

When it comes to welcoming a new cat into your home, the key word is preparation and the first thing to prepare is a cosy, safe home. Follow these simple guidelines to ensure your new family member feels comfortable and reassured on the Big Day and to make your home cat-proof and safe for your pet.

PREPARING A COSY HOME….

First of all, buy your new family member her very own eating and drinking bowls, preferably in ceramic or stainless steel, and place them in a carefully selected space. Following on from her previous diet, you can gradually transition into a new diet over the course of a week.

Then, install a cat litter, one for every cat in the home. The litter must be cleaned on a regular basis in order to ensure good hygiene. Place the litter in a peaceful spot, far from her feeding, sleeping and playing areas.

Also set up a scratching post. It’s worth it! Not only will this avoid you having to buy new furniture, it is also important for you cat to be able to wear down her claws. This precaution will be all the more useful if there are other cats in the home.

Do not forget to buy your cat some dedicated grooming equipment. Brushing your cat once or twice a week, according to the length and quality of her hair, avoids knotting and prevents your cat from ingesting hairballs when grooming herself.

To help your new feline friend settle in, you can also use synthetic feline pheromones. Once a day, spray it on your furniture to help your cat discover her new environment, and to stop her from marking her territory! It will be also useful with other cats in the home.



… AND A SAFE ENVIRONMENT.

Make sure to remove all elements that could be potentially harmful or toxic for your cat. Some substances are obviously harmful for her, such as household cleaning products, but others, for instance chocolate, tea, coffee, and even plants (oleander, lilies, poinsettias, philodendron, hydrangea, hyacinth, daffodils and tulips) are common toxins for cats.

Secure all electrical chords to avoid your cat or kitten from chewing through them! Provide your cat with a stimulating environment with lots of little toys (eg: balls of scrunched up paper) to focus her attention and distract her from anything dangerous. Remove any sharp objects… or objects that could be bitten, licked or destroyed, from within reach. Also watch out for open windows to prevent your cat from falling.

In addition, think about entering your vet’s contact info into your phone, so that it's handy in the event of an emergency. Take advantage of regular visits to ensure your cat is vaccinated, correctly identified with microchip ID at the National Registration, and has received adequate anti-parasite treatment. Your vet may also help you put together a first aid kit, including basic items such as eye rinsing water, tweezers, ears rinsing solution, gauze bandages…

BRINGING YOUR NEW COMPANION HOME

Get a cat carrier to make the ride home a little more homely for your new friend. Spraying your cat carrier with 4 sprays of synthetic feline hormones 1 day prior to travelling will reassure and soothe your cat/kitten during that first journey. Favour a cat carrier that opens from the top, as it is more user-friendly.

The smell of an old toy or blanket from her previous owner may also reduce your cat's initial anxiety. Indeed, travelling, new smells and foreign noises will contribute to making your cat feel scared and uneasy. A perfectly natural response are yowls; so, do not overreact, try to just limit the stimulation.

FIRST DAY AT HOME WITH HER

Getting your new cat home can be surprisingly stressful for both of you if you are not prepared. Keep in mind that while you and your family are sure to be very excited to welcome your new cat or kitten into your lives, she needs as much reassurance as possible on this emotional day. Follow these simple steps to ensure the trip goes as smoothly as possible and to make meeting the family an enjoyable, happy experience for all.

MEETING THE NEW FAMILY

When arriving home, install the cat carrier in a separate room. Gradually open the room's door(s) for her to discover her new environment at her own pace. Cats love open doors, but a vast environment from day one can be overwhelming.

Gradually introduce your new family member to your existing family members, including other pets. Your kitten/cat should be left alone for the first few days in order to adapt to her new environment. Then, gradually introduce new family members, without pressuring her into interacting with everyone from day one.

As much as possible, avoid any excessive and stressful noises. They could disturb or stress your new kitten/cat, especially noises from household machinery (hoover, drills, mower and so on…)

GETTING OFF TO A TASTY START AND PLAYTIME

After transitioning diets over a period of 5 to 7 days, adapt the nutritional quality and quantity of your cat's feeding routine (on average, 50 g per day for a 4kg-cat) in accordance with her age, status and her level of activity.

Cats are notoriously bad drinkers. Therefore, ensure your cat has easy access to clean and fresh water at all times. You may also counteract a tendency not to drink water by feeding her moist/wet foods on a daily basis to meet her average need of 150 ml per day (for a 4kg-cat).

What more could be done? Oh, yes, of course, get some toys! Play is a great way to communicate with your cat. You can either buy toys, or you can simply improvise (e.g. with a piece of cloth). Quite often, your cat/kitten will decide herself what are and aren't her toys! Playing is a nice way of strengthening the bond between your beloved life companion and you too. Playing is also a very good way to keep your cat stimulated and active,

especially with indoor cats. So, enjoy the training and be prepared to need a good deal of patience!

In short, ensuring that your cat has the appropriate food and water from the start will help make the transition to your home easier for your new companion. But once you have taken care of her basic nutritional needs, don't forget that what your cat needs most is lots of attention and playtime. Be sure to schedule time to play and begin forging a loving bond that will grow stronger with every day!

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1. **What is the 3-3-3 rule for kittens?**

   The 3-3-3 rule is a guide for your new kitten to settle in. The first three days usually involve them hiding and not eating much, which can be confusing when you may be worrying how many times to feed a kitten. However, after three weeks they'll be feeling comfortable and be eating normally. By three months they'll feel fully at home and will start forming strong bonds with the family.

2. **Where should my kitten sleep on the first night?**

   Your kitten should sleep somewhere safe, warm, quiet and enclosed during their first night at their new home, away from other members of the household or pets. This should ideally be a low-traffic area of the home. Make sure they have all the essentials they need, such as bedding, boxes, food, water, toys and a litter tray. The area should also be fully kitten-proofed so it poses no dangers. This includes securing bin lids, windows, cupboards and doors and removing any dangerous choking hazards, electrical wires, plants, human food or cleaning items.

3. **How long does a kitten need to adjust to a new home?**

   Bringing a kitten home can be an overwhelming experience for them at first, and you need to keep this in mind while allowing them enough time to adjust to their new surroundings. It can take 3 days for them to get used to the sights, sounds and smells of their new environment. They may spend the first few days hiding as they adjust. After 3 weeks, they should be growing in confidence, exploring the home more and feeling at ease. By 3 months, they should be fully adjusted, creating strong bonds with their new family.

4. **How long does it take for a kitten to get used to you?**

   The 333 rule reminds us to be patient with new kittens; they may appear withdrawn and fearful during their first 3 days in their new home. After 3 weeks they should be coming out of their shell, feeling more confident and exploring and interacting with you. After 3 months, they should be used to their new surroundings and family, feeling

at home and at ease with you.

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