

# PREPARING FOR A NEW CAT

So, you want to get a new cat! Cats can be a wonderful part of your life, but make sure you have considered all factors before deciding to add one to your family.



## CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING

- ☐ Cats can live up to 14-22 years old
- ☐ Cats need at least 1 hour of attention per day
- ☐ Long haired cats may need up to 20 minutes of grooming per day
- ☐ Cats are safest and healthiest when kept inside
- ☐ Having a cat is a lifetime responsibility and should not be taken lightly

**Still interested?** Then it is time to prepare for your new kitty! These steps can ensure an easy transition, for both you and your new cat.

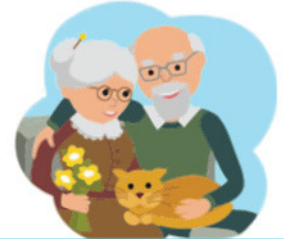


Please consider adopting an adult cat from your local shelter or rescue. Adult cats make great pets who are already past the crazy kitten stage. They all need great homes!



## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE BRINGING YOUR CAT HOME

- ☐ What food was the cat eating? You will want to slowly transition from the current food to the new food, especially if the diet change is for a medical reason.
- ☐ What is the cat's current feeding schedule? (i.e. once or twice per day, being free fed, etc.)
- ☐ Has the cat had any previous health problems or is on any medication?
- ☐ What vaccinations has the cat already received?
- ☐ Is the cat spayed or neutered?
- ☐ Does the cat have favorite toys, treats, a brush, or bedding?
- ☐ Does the cat like to be brushed?
- ☐ What type of cat litter is the cat currently using? You will want to use the same type to start in order to reduce stress and make the cat feel comfortable.
- ☐ Is there anything specific the cat loves or is afraid of? (i.e. dogs, kids, vacuum, loud noises, etc.)



## ESSENTIAL ITEMS

- ☐ Shallow food and water bowls (cats do not like their whiskers to rub on the bowls)
- ☐ At least one week's worth of the food the cat is currently eating
- ☐ Any medication the cat is current taking
- ☐ Food you plan on feeding your cat in the future
- ☐ Treats the cat likes
- ☐ Various toys (catnip ones are a particular favorite!)
- ☐ Breakaway collar with ID tag
- ☐ Beds or comfortable places to sleep
- ☐ Brushes
- ☐ Nail clippers
- ☐ Cat litter and uncovered litter box (covered boxes can get stinky for cats, who have a stronger sense of smell than humans)
- ☐ Hard plastic carrier with good ventilation
- ☐ Scratching post (favorite posts are hard, tall and stable)

### Optional Items

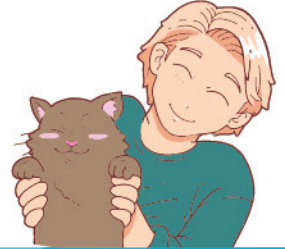
- ☐ Feliway (feline pheromone that reduces stress)
- ☐ Harness and leash if you want to walk your cat outside
- ☐ Cat water fountain (many cats prefer running water)
- ☐ Food puzzles for active cats (i.e. cat kongs and cat food dispenser balls)
- ☐ Outdoor cat enclosure so your cat can safely enjoy the outdoors
- ☐ Cat grass and fresh catnip plants (can be purchased from pet supply stores)





## PREPARING FOR YOUR NEW FRIEND

- ☐ Make an appointment with your veterinarian to get your kitty checked within a week of coming home.
- ☐ Have a small, quiet, and safe room ready for the cat to use. No other animals should have access to this space. Plan to spend time in this room so your cat can get to know you.
- ☐ Add hiding spaces to the room where the cat can go when stressed. Do not disturb these spaces as they are just for the kitty. Cats also like to be up high to help them feel safe.
- ☐ Cat-proof the room (and later the house). Remove or cover electrical cords; remove toxic plants; put away threads, strings, ribbons, medications, cleaners, rubber bands, paper clips, and breakable items.
- ☐ Kittens should not be left unattended loose in your home for at least the first few weeks. They will need to continue to stay in a safe space, such as the transition room, while you are gone. This should continue until you are confident your kitten will not get into trouble when unsupervised.
- ☐ Place comfortable sleeping areas in spaces where you want your cat to rest. Beds, blankets, tall scratching posts and window ledges are all very popular.



## DURING THE TRANSITION

- ☐ While your new cat is adjusting to her room, make sure to let her come to you. Do not drag her out for cuddle time or disturb her hiding spaces.
- ☐ Spend quiet time in her room. This will allow her to you on her own time frame.
- ☐ Watch for signs of stress such as hiding, lack of appetite, not using the litter box, and not grooming. Consult with your veterinarian if you see any of these signs.
- ☐ Once she is relaxed in her space (at least 3 days, but could be weeks depending on the cat), slowly introduce her to the rest of the home and any other pets. This should be done in slow stages.
- ☐ Once she has access to the house, leave the room accessible to her so she can return when she becomes stressed. Leaving a baby gate lifted a few inches in the doorway can discourage kids and other pets from entering while still allowing her access.
- ☐ If you have multiple cats, be sure to provide multiple feeding stations and litter boxes to prevent conflict. A good litter box rule is, number of cats plus one (3 litter boxes for 2 cats, 4 litter boxes for 3 cats, etc).
- ☐ If you are changing food and/or litter, but sure to transition slowly and watch for signs of stress. Slowly add the new food and/or litter and increase a little bit every day over a period of a couple weeks until it is fully transitioned. If your kitty shows signs of distress such as not eating, diarrhea or vomiting, stop the transition and consult your veterinarian.

### Getting a new kitty is a time of excitement and joy!

Hopefully these tips help make the process as smooth and easy as possible!



Wet Noses  
PET SITTING

