



## Caring for your new kitten/ cat

*Thank you for adopting from FurKids Rescue Officer and congratulations on the arrival of your new family member. The following information is provided to help you with all the necessary health care your new kitten will require.*

### INTRODUCING YOUR NEW KITTEN

A kitten brings so much entertainment and companionship to your home. When your kitten first arrives home it may feel a little apprehensive in its new environment. To help make this less stressful, have a safe room for your kitten (for example: the laundry) allow your kitten to explore their new surroundings without too much interference or noise and introduce your kitten to its toilet area and eating area. Allow only part of your house to be explored at a time rather than the whole place. Children should be reminded that the new kitten needs lots of love and also rest therefore should not be over-handled. Any other family pets should be introduced slowly and under strict supervision of an adult.

### NUTRITION

Kittens should be fed a combination of both a high quality commercial kitten food and some natural foods to ensure a balanced diet is provided. We feed the kittens a mixture of Royal Canin kitten wet food, whiskas kitten wet food fresh meat (kangaroo, chicken) and dry food. Each feed provide  $\frac{1}{2}$  a can or half a pouch. As your kitten gets older, increase the food provided. If you are unsure, please contact you vet.

Avoid giving cow's milk to kittens but always ensure they have access to fresh, clean water at all times. Please note that cats are obligate carnivores therefore they CANNOT be placed on a vegetarian or vegan diet or they will die.

Kittens under 4 months can't regulate their food intake well and therefore meals should be offered often (3 x daily) and dry food left out at all times for your kitten to eat.

Change in diet should be made gradually as sudden changes can cause diarrhoea.

### BEDDING

Although your kitten may want to share your bed it is important to provide them with a comfortable dry bed of their own as well. A box with a blanket is a great start.

### TOILET TRAINING

Kittens learn to use the litter tray from around 4 weeks of age but they prone to have accidents in their new homes as this is a new environment with new and different smells.

Place several litter trays in a quiet and private area for your kitten to use when they need to go to the toilet. Cats are very clean animals and do not like to use dirty litter trays. Ensure you clean your kitten's tray regularly.

Reward-based training is the most humane and effective way to train pets. This type of training involves rewarding your cat when they perform a 'desired' behaviour. Rewards can be in the form of a tasty cat food treat, verbal praise or patting. 'Rewards' positively reinforce the desired behaviour and make it more likely your cat will perform the behaviour again.

Never punish your kitten physically or yell or spray with a water bottle, as this will scare them. Cats are also unlikely to associate the punishment with their behaviour leading to confusion. The best thing to do in these situations is to generally ignore the behaviour or place your kitten in its litter tray to remind them.





## PLAY TIME



Play time is important for bonding between you and your kitten. Kittens are very playful and curious and love to play. Environmental enrichment is essential for your kitten to ensure it is not climbing your curtains or wrestling with your power cords. We recommend a scratching post to teach your kitten where to direct its claws. Balls, furry mice and other toys like fish on a string are all designed especially for the development of your kitten co-ordination and will provide them with hours of fun.



## HEALTH CARE



Your kitten must go to the vet within the first 7 days of adoption so that it can have a health check, receive its first vaccination and become familiar with a veterinarian. Please ensure it completes its full course of vaccinations to safeguard your kitten from potentially fatal diseases.

Worms are a common cause of ill health in pets. Kittens need to be wormed every two weeks until 12 weeks of age, then monthly until 6 months of age. After 6 months of age, worming is recommended every 3 months for effective protection.

Fleas will find your way onto your cat and into your home if you do not use flea control products. There are excellent products available and we recommend Advocate or Revolution monthly as this treats worms and fleas. Please note that some dog flea control products are extremely toxic to cats so please only use cat specific products.

Desexing, prior to sexual maturity effectively prevents unplanned and unwanted litters of kittens, helping to reduce the number of unwanted cats and kittens in the community. Desexing also provides health and behavioural benefits. You have agreed to desex the kitten yourself when signing the contract or kitten has already been desexed or you have been given a voucher.

Regular grooming (gentle brushing) is important particularly for medium-haired and long-haired cats. Start grooming your kitten early on so that it becomes an enjoyable bonding activity and part of routine care. Positively reward your cat with a tasty cat food treat, verbal praise and patting for allowing you to groom them. This way your cat will associate grooming with positive things, making it easier for both of you.

In general, cats don't need to be bathed and most cats can find it quite stressful. Therefore generally avoid bathing unless recommended by your vet.

Some commonly found plants, such as lilies, are toxic to cats and it is important that you familiarise yourself with these and remove them from your garden and house and avoid purchasing them in floral arrangements. NEVER give unprescribed medications to your cat without checking with a vet first. Even aspirin and paracetamol are dangerous.



## LAWS OF CAT OWNERS



It is important to know what the laws are particularly regarding registration, microchipping and desexing. Your kitten has already been microchipped prior to adoption. Please check with your local council regarding any laws relating to keeping a pet cat.



## SOMETHING ISN'T QUITE RIGHT?



If your kitten appears lethargic or off their food, or you have **ANY** concerns about your kitten's wellbeing, PLEASE call your vet or FurKids Rescue Officer on 0433 571835.

*Once again, congratulations on your new addition and please feel free to call FurKids Rescue Officer should you require any additional information, guidance or advice regarding raising your kitten.*

