

# Choosing a Cat



First and foremost, do your homework. Never choose a pet on the spur of the moment.

## Where Can I Get a Cat?

- Breed Rescue Organizations
- Animal Rescue Organizations
- City Pound
- Responsible Breeders

Do some research if you want a pure breed, but, there are thousands of cats in your area that are in need of a good home. *Adults and senior cats makes excellent companions.* Many wonderful cats are at your local shelters and pounds. Please consider **Adoption** first.

Read: [Pet Adoption Myths Debunked](#)

## Where NOT to Get a Cat?

- Backyard Breeders - Many ads are from backyard breeders. Let the buyer beware! Backyard breeder contribute to the homeless pet population - please don't support them.
- Pet Stores - At least 90% come from puppy or kitty mills.
- From the Street: Don't expect a feral cat to be friendly. A stray cat is not a feral cat. \*\*\* [Read more here](#) \*\*\*

Children often prefer a kitten as they are captivated by its playfulness, however very young children need parental supervision when handling kittens to ensure that they do not inadvertently hurt the kitten by cuddling too hard or dropping it.

Consider all family members but make a wise decision so you and your new cat will be compatible and happy.



Most cats are affectionate. Some are vocal; some quiet. A cat need companionship and should not be left all alone in an apartment all day long, day in and day out. Adopting two, if you can, is the way to go.

*Don't forget, older cats make wonderful pets.*

With good genes and good pet care, an indoor cats can live 15-20 years and beyond.



## **What to Expect**

Expect a few days adjustment, esp. if there are other pets. Initial isolation from other pets and small children is a good idea. Try gradual introduction with other pets.

**Vaccinations** - Rabies shots are required by law in most places. For all other vaccinations, it is best to discuss this with your veterinarian.

**De-clawing** is a sensitive topic and should be done as a last resort when other options exhausted. Please consult your veterinarian.

## **Indoor or Outdoor?**

Indoor cats tend to be healthier and live longer.

An indoor cat's health can be monitored more closely. However, there are times when this is not always possible. Sometimes male cats, even neutered, must go outside or they will mark territory in the house, especially in a multi-cat household. Your veterinarian is the best resource for decisions.

If at all possible, keep your cats indoors away from cars, diseases, and other animals which may prey on them.

## **Basic Supply List**

Litter pan, cat litter, and scoop - There are so many varieties, but the important thing is to clean often enough the urine does not repel the cat with an ammonia odor. This generally means sifting out soaked litter daily. Remember, cats smell twenty times better than we do. When that happens, the cat may urinate out of the box. Inappropriate elimination/urination is a



leading reason cats are surrendered to the pound for euthanasia. In many instances, the cats are not the problem. It can be the litter. You may have to find the right one that pleases your cat.

### **Cats and Litter Boxes**

The great thing about a cat is that she arrives fully assembled, with no training necessary - except on the part of the owner. Unlike a puppy, who must be housebroken, a kitten is already programmed by her cat mom to use a litter box. All you have to do is show her where it is.

How did cats acquire this wonderful habit? It's an inborn matter of self-preservation. In the wild, cats bury their feces to hide their presence from predators or territorial rivals. Domestic house cats continue the habit, which is one of the things that make them such clean companions. The urge to hide her presence is so strong that even if a cat eliminates outside her box, she will still go through the motions of digging and covering.

Although the litter box habit is deeply ingrained, there are several instances in which a cat may stop using her box, but, doing a little detective work, can soon set your cat back on the right path.

The first thing is to consider if your cat is ill, since this behavior may indicate same. You may have to take her to the vet for a check-up and a clean bill of health. Cleanliness, litter preference, or household changes can be a factor. With her sensitive nose, any cat would be turned off by a box that isn't scooped frequently. Daily cleaning may take care of the problem.

Some cats are very particular about litter type. Scent and texture may be very important to them. A simple change from what you now use may quickly solve the problem.



If all else fails, try to think of any recent change that may have stressed your cat. Cats are creatures of habit and a new pet, a baby or even a household routine can affect sensitive cats.

Make any and all changes gradually to give your wonderful feline time to adjust. Also be sure to give extra attention and love to combat her insecurity.

Being vigilant can prevent small things from getting bigger and out of hand.

Some clump litters have been associated with illness and death of kittens, especially long-hair kittens. Please check with your vet first.

Many new litters have recently come on the market. They are an excellent alternative to clay, especially the pine litters.

**NOTE:**

\*\*\* Some cats do not like any litter and will urinate in odd places such as an empty box or bathroom sink without having a physical problem such as a bladder infection. Most times you can find a litter that your cat will like (often sand or something that feels soft under his paws) and remember what you may think efficient, your cat may not like. Seek veterinarian advice.

\*\*\* Some cats who pee excessively while losing weight may have Diabetes.



## **Food**

Cat food. Dry food lasts longer - and costs less - but: read this:

### **What Causes Diabetes In The Cat**

Very young kittens and older cats with health problem may need special food. What is the best cat food? There is no one answer. You can discuss this with your vet. Many manufactures make foods for kittens, senior cats, indoor cats, etc. It will be a matter of lifestyle, and personal taste; both yours and your cat's.



**Food and water bowls** - It is very important to have fresh water available at all times for your cat. From a hygiene standpoint, stainless steel, glass, and ceramics with lead-free paint work very well. Cats cannot digest milk so a milk alternative is highly suggested.

## **Toys**

Cats are very creative and what you might not think is a toy will be to him. Some cats will play in a paper bag, with cellophane, sting or a ballpoint pen and be quite content. If you do buy toys for him, make sure they are for cats and cannot harm him.

## **Grooming**

**Brushes** - The coat will dictate the brush you get. Cats love to be brushed and combed.



### **Misc.**

Cleaning - Clean and rinse your pets bowls daily. Some people use disposable ware for sanitary reasons and to stop spread of disease in multi-cat households.

Scratching posts - Some cats love them, some not. A de-clawed cat will have go through the motion of scratching but may not need one.

There is a lot of information available on the web and in books. Speak to cat owners and they will share their enthusiasm for the fabulous feline.

### **Before You Bring Home a Cat**

Before you bring your new cat home, it's a good idea to prepare a room for her. For the first day or so, this room will be her territory, and should contain everything a cat needs to feel safe. The bathroom is an ideal location, as you'll need to set up a litter box. Add one or two inches of litter and place the box in a low-traffic spot.

The *ASPCA* recommends that you create a safe hiding place for your pet if she is very fearful or stressed. A covered cat bed works well, but you can also use an upside-down cardboard box. Make sure you cut out two doors, as some felines feel safer if they have access to an escape route. Whatever you choose, it need not be large-just big enough for the cat to stand up, turn around and lie down in. Set this up in a corner, ideally positioned where your cat can see the door. Add a cardboard scratching pad and you're in business.

On the big day, bring your cat straight to the room you've prepared. Place the carrier next to her hiding place, set out some fresh water and open the

door to the carrier. You may be tempted, but do not pull your pet out. It's best to leave the room, close the door and let her come out on her own.

When 15 minutes have passed, quietly place some premium-quality cat food next to her water bowl. And remember, don't reach for her-it's important that you let her make the first move. If she doesn't show any interest in the food, pick up the plate after 15 minutes and discard it. Wait several hours and offer her fresh food. Don't be alarmed if she's retreated to her safe haven or hasn't set but one paw out of her carrier. It is very common for cats to hide in a new territory. Extremely sensitive animals, or cats who haven't been properly socialized, may take up to a week or more to get their bearings.

If your new pet has eaten and wants you to pet her and is exploring the room, you can begin to expand her horizons. Feel free to open up the door and let her explore. It's best if you do this gradually, one room at a time, until you've introduced her to the entire house.

Additional Links:

[Your New Cat](#)

[Introducing Your New Cat ~ Helpful Hints](#)



*Remember to **Always** be a responsible pet owner and consult with your Veterinarian often.*