

♥ First days of the kitten at home:



Arriving in an unfamiliar place always causes some stress, whether you are a cat or not. The difference is in how each person will experience this stress and how long it will take to adapt to novelty and thus regain confidence. One of the main reactions of a cat to stress will be to hide. Being concealed provides a sense of security, allowing to calm the emotions that have arisen with stress. The cat can then observe its environment without being seen (according to his own criteria) and find the best solution to "survive" to upheaval. Between feline individuals, there is a great deal of variability in their ability to adapt to change. Likewise, for each individual, these abilities may vary over time. The safer the cat feels, the more comfortable it will be and the less it will feel the need to hide.



THIS ROOM SHOULD NOT BE THE PERSON'S BEDROOM HAVING ALLERGIES!

The first step is to make a room just for him. Limit access to the apartment means limiting the space to explore and tame at the beginning to allow the cat to establish more easily new benchmarks. However, although access is limited to the rest of the house, the room insulation must in itself be able to provide the cat with EVERYTHING it needs. So we will find there a corner to eat, a bowl or fountain of water, safe places to climb, hiding places safe and welcoming bedding away from food. This piece of insulation is therefore not a prison, but rather a reception room.

This period is the perfect time to get to know each other and bond with our newcomer, since each day, we will spend time with him to feed him, play with him and get to know him. The kitten will be able to live in this room until it feel comfortable exploring the rest of your home. It can be 2 days, 7 days, 12 days, there is no rush ... when you think he feels ready, you will just leave the door open, so he can explore at will, always coming back to this familiar room if necessary.

THE LIST OF ITEMS YOU NEED TO GET FOR THE WELL-BEING OF YOUR NEW KITTEN



BELOW APPEARS THE LIST OF ITEMS THAT WE USE AT THE CATTERY AND TO WHICH THE KITTENS ARE USED

THE LITTER BOX

Ideally a container without a lid on the top since the cat scratches the litter to bury its needs and in doing so, raises the dust. With a cover, the cat is prone to more dust in its lungs while this model allows it to breathe easier.

Also, note that this model is very large since the kitten will grow larger and the male in particular can grow quite large, he must feel comfortable.

I wash the litter from top to bottom every week with a cleaner and a disinfectant. At this time, I put new litter in the box.

This bin model is designed by Moderna, in beige color and huge, 64.5X48X27.4cm
We have 7 similar ones and cats love it.



AVAILABLE WITH OR WITHOUT COVER



A new model has recently entered the market.

I was more than impressed with its quality. Always choose the largest bin.

Made by Stefanplast, the Queen model (available in various colors) is fabulous. Nice dimensions, 21.65"X27.95"X9.64"H, it is available in some pet stores in Canada as well as in the USA. For those who prefer a closed litter box, the cover is available.

<https://www.stefanplast.it/en-us/products/pet/cat-toilets>

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LITTER BAG OR BOX

Kittens sometimes tend to eat the grains of the litter box when stressed, so it is important in the early days to offer them exclusively non clumping, unscented litter. Buy only one bag or box of non clumping, unscented litter.

When your kitten is less stressed, afterwards, you can offer him unscented clumping litter. Urine and feces can easily be removed with a sieve. Generally, after 10 days at home, you can use the clumping litter. Choose an UNSCENTED litter.

IMPORTANT

No matter the brand or model but no litter that would have any connection with food so do NOT use TOFU litter, do NOT use HEMP litter. Also, don't use paper, bead or silica litters at first. Just use a good, unscented, non-clumping litter like the one pictured.



Trash can:

I like to use this trash can to throw away the litter droppings every day. It is located right next to the litter box. It blocks bad smells and prevents me from having to carry it all outside the house.

Available in pet stores.



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The transport cage:

Medium in size since your kitten will be growing, it should be clean before each use. This is rigid but there are flexible models.

It is necessary to pick up your new kitten at the Cattery and compulsory!

No kitten will leave in a cardboard box.

You will need it for your visits to the vet.

Easy to obtain in pet stores, choose a spacious model ... your kitten does not like to be cramped.

THE MODEL DOES NOT MATTER, BUT THIS ONE IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING SINCE IT ALLOWS THE DOOR TO BE REMOVED EASILY AND QUICKLY AND CAN BE TRANSFORMED INTO A SMALL HOUSE OR A RELAXING PLACE. THE KITTEN WILL BE LESS STRESSED WHEN YOU HAVE TO USE THE CAGE SINCE HE WILL ALREADY KNOW AND LOVE IT.

TIPS AND TRICKS

I USE " FELIWAY " AS A VAPORIZER FOR TRIPS BY CAR. I HAVE NOTICED THAT THE MAJORITY OF KITTENS ARE CALMER IN THEIR CAGES. I VAPORIZE DIRECTLY INTO THE ANIMAL'S CAGE AT LEAST 5 MINUTES BEFORE PLACING THE ANIMAL IN ITS CAGE. CAUTION THE ODOR IS GREAT FOR THE FIRST MINUTES ... THIS MAKES TRIPS AND VISITS TO THE VET LESS STRESSFUL FOR YOUR PET.



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OUR CATS GENERALLY LIKE TO RELAX ON THE CAT TREE. THE FAVORITE SECTION ON A CAT TREE IS OFTEN THE HAMMOCK, SO I ADVISE YOU TO CHOOSE A TREE WITH A HAMMOCK. THEY TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THEIR CLAWS ON THE POSTS DRESSED IN SISAL ROPE! I EVEN HUNG A BALL OF FEATHERS UNDER ONE OF THE FLOORS AND THEY CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT TO PLAY. IT IS A HEARTWARMING, FUN AND PRACTICAL PLACE !!

NO NEED FOR IT TO BE TOO HIGH, THE KITTEN COULD INJURE ITSELF.

THE MODEL I USE, SHOWN HERE, WAS PURCHASED A FEW YEARS AGO AND IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE IN STORES. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, MANY MODELS ON THE MARKET.

Choosing an adequate scratching post;

A good scratching post must be tall (at least 90cm height by 10cm width), and stand on a solid, stable base that won't tip over when the cat uses it. There are vertical, horizontal and diagonal scratching posts and each cat has its preferences. Make sure you get one your cat will like. The material is also important; sisal rope, cardboard, wood and carpeting are widely used and generally appreciated by our feline friends.

Location is the key for scratching
Provide the cat with a scratching post where it's been scratching. Your cat is telling you where it wants to scratch. Once the cat has adopted the scratching post, move it very gradually to where you want it, while keeping it near the cat-elected spot. If you move it too fast or too far, the cat may go back to its chosen scratch post. Cats tend to scratch objects located near entryways (door frames, couch, rocking chair...); this is where you should put the scratching post. The larger the house, the more scratching posts you need. To make the posts more interesting, you could sprinkle treats or catnip on or around it, and play with a fishing rod type toy with the cat so that it will 'accidentally' scratch it and realize how fun it is.



CLAW SCISSORS FOR CATS AND KITTENS
AVAILABLE IN PET STORES

Cat claws can cause serious injury, and it's important to know how to maintain them properly. You want to keep them short and smooth. If you're not sure how to do it, ask the veterinary technician to show you how to trim a cat's claws during your cat's next regular check-up.

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Manufactured by DRINKWELL



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THE WATER FOUNTAIN

We use these fountain models at the Cattery. Easy to use and weekly maintenance. Our cats love these fountains.

You can, however, use a simple bowl of water and change the water on a daily basis.

Easy to get from pet stores.

The fountain is much more than a simple gadget for pet lovers: it offers several advantages compared to a simple bowl of water.

Filtration: The device filter eliminates excess magnesium and calcium found in your water. It also removes bacteria, hair, dust, and anything that could make the water disgusting.

Freshness: The circulation system keeps the water fresh and oxygenated at all times. Many felines hate standing water, hence their interest in drinking from the tap!

Stimulation: The fountain produces visual and auditory stimulation that attracts your companion and may encourage him to drink more.

Better Kidney Health: Encouraging cats to drink more takes care of their kidneys and allows them to eliminate waste more easily.

Storage capacity: Since it holds more water than a single bowl, you won't need to refill it as often! It is therefore practical during a short vacation, so that your companion does not miss anything.

For the first few days, also add a bowl of water next to your fountain ... some kittens are not yet used to the fountain. The kitten should not be dehydrated.

FOR THE FIRST FEW DAYS, ALSO ADD A BOWL OF WATER NEXT TO YOUR FOUNTAIN ... SOME KITTENS ARE NOT USED TO THE FOUNTAIN YET. THE KITTEN SHOULD NOT BE DEHYDRATED.

***** WE ADVISE AGAINST PURCHASING MODELS THAT DO NOT HAVE A TANK AT THE BASE.**

These models are rather poorly designed since if you run out of electricity, your cat will have no more water to drink.



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DRY FOOD

At the Cattery, we do not restrict our animals and food is available to them at all times 24 hours a day. No need to buy a large bowl of food, ideally, the food should be given every day since too much of it, in the open air for more than 48 hours, will lose its properties and may even cause diarrhea. When it comes time to buy food, be careful not to go wrong, it is essential for the health of the kitten ... there are a variety of choices on the market and several bags are visually alike. It is essential to buy the same brand and same flavor that your kitten knows and eats at the Cattery. The same food should ideally be given throughout the first year since kittens are used to these kibbles and they have no diarrhea. By changing flavor or brand, the kitten would be susceptible to diarrhea, which should be avoided at all costs. The only acceptable reason to change food would be sudden intolerance, which is unlikely. Or, on the order of the veterinarian for any problem. Note that not all pet stores sell this brand and they will try to convince you to buy a different brand. Needless to say, that would be a really bad idea. If your time is precious, call before you travel to make sure you will be able to purchase this product at the pet store near you or check online.



VERY IMPORTANT TO BUY THIS BRAND AVAILABLE IN CANADA AND USA -- MADE IN USA

FROMM FAMILY GOLD FOR KITTENS

DON'T GIVE ANY TREATS BEFORE THE AGE OF 8 MONTHS.

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO VALIDATE WHAT FOOD YOUR KITTEN IS FED BEFORE PURCHASING A FOOD BAG. IT VARIES FROM ONE LITTER TO ANOTHER. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PURCHASE THE SAME BRAND.

BE CAREFUL OF PLANTS AND FOOD !!



SOME PLANTS ARE
POISONOUS

I ALLOW MYSELF TO REMIND YOU THAT SOME PLANTS CAN BE TOXIC TO YOUR NEW PET ... SO IT IS IMPORTANT TO DO SOME RESEARCH TO VALIDATE IF THE PLANTS YOU HAVE COULD BE HARMFUL AND IN THE UNCERTAINTY IT WOULD BE IDEAL TO DISPOSE OF IT ... SAME THING FOR CERTAIN FOODS, AMONG OTHERS, GRAPES AND OTHER POME OR STONE FRUITS, NUTS, GARLIC AND ONIONS, POTATOES, CABBAGE, TURNIPS, MUSHROOMS, AVOCADOS, COFFEE AND TEAS, CHOCOLATES, RAW MEATS AND FISH, CHEESE AND MILK ARE TOXIC TO CATS ... GIVING LEFTOVERS FROM THEIR MEALS OR A FEW PIECES OF DINNER THAT YOU ARE PREPARING CAN SERIOUSLY HARM THEIR HEALTH OR EVEN CAUSE DEATH. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND MARIJUANA COULD ALSO POISON THE ANIMAL AND CAUSE ITS DEATH !!!



IMPORTANT:

FELIWAY Classic is a drug free solution that mimics cat's natural facial pheromones, which may help your pet feel calmer in common stressful situations like arriving in his new home !! I highly recommend !!



WE RECOMMEND

- Moistening your pet prior to daily combing reduces allergens released into the air. Allerpets Grooming Solution may work well .
- Litter boxes tend to cause the greatest problems with asthma. Change litter boxes frequently as Fel d1 and other allergens are found in urine and faeces. Ideally, place the litter box in the garage or a room that can be vented to the outside. The person who is allergic to cats should never clean the litter box
- Frequent vacuuming will reduce allergen levels dramatically. --Do not allow the kitten in bedrooms of individuals with severe allergies
- High efficiency particulate absorbing (HEPA) filters are high-efficiency air filters, and are good for removing small particles
- Sometimes an air purifier can be very helpful in removing allergens. I use the Dyson brand but several companies offer very good air purifiers. Ideally place the purifier in the room of the allergic person

Ideally, use all 3 Grooming tools

Metal comb - standard regular cat brush and "Furminator" Cat deShedding Tool for long hair cat



Method for the conflict-free introduction of a new cat

You fell in love with a gorgeous little kitty and have decided to adopt the beautiful Princess. Like any new parent, you're overflowing with happiness... when a worrying thought creeps into your mind. Will Princess get along with Queenie, the cat who's shared your life until now? How do you introduce them so that they live together happily? How do you avoid traumatizing your furry sweethearts? How you wish that all goes well and that your cats live in harmony!

Even though some cats meeting for the first time can hit it off right away, more often than not, the sudden arrival of a new cat in a household results in stress, fights, and issues. Following a few simple but crucial steps will allow for easier integration of all Princesses, acceptance by all Queenies, and cohabitation will be peachy. However, the first step is to have the new kitty examined by your veterinarian to make sure it's healthy.



Why is the cat hiding?

Moving into a new place is always stressful, whatever the species. The difference lies in how this stress is handled, and how long it takes to adapt to the new surroundings and feel comfortable. A cat's first reaction in the face of any stressful change is to hide. Hiding provides a sense of security, which allows the cat to calm down. From there, the cat can observe its new environment without being seen, and establish the best strategy to 'survive' this upsetting situation. The ability to adapt to change varies significantly among individuals. Likewise, for each individual, this ability may vary over time. As we can't predict how the new cat will react to its new surroundings, we better plan for the worst to avoid unpleasant surprises. The safer the cat feels, the more comfortable it will be, and less likely to hide.

Integrating a nervous cat

Set up a room for Princess before she arrives. Restricting access to the apartment means limiting the space which the new cat can explore and get used to at first to make it easier to establish new landmarks. However, despite restricting access to the rest of the house, the isolation room must contain EVERYTHING the cat may need. There must be a feeding area, a water bowl or fountain, sturdy places to climb, safe hiding places and a welcoming litter box, away from the food. The isolation room is NOT a prison, but rather a sanctuary for the new cat, apart from the resident cat.

The duration of the isolation period can vary; you want to prevent any contact between Princess and Queenie as long as Princess is not perfectly comfortable in her room, AND Queenie has stopped worrying about what's going on behind the door of said room. This can take from 14 days to a few weeks, depending on the cat. It's better to take your time since a hasty introduction can lead to problems. Use this time to get to know your new buddy and bond since you'll be visiting the cat every day to feed it, play with it, pet it, give it treats... In the meantime, the cats will be able to smell each other through the door. You can expect some hissing and batting under the door; this is okay. While Princess and Queenie are separated by a door, you don't have to worry about cat fights.

How to keep the old cat from attacking the new cat?

The worst mistake you could make would be to force the cats together before they're ready. You'll know Princess is ready when she's happy in her room. Happy cats walk around with their tail and head held high. They come to us, eat with appetite, play, and display healthy behaviours. The same applies to Queenie. Before you let your kitties meet, the new cat should discover the rest of the house, without the resident cat being around. To do so, put the latter in a closed room with some tasty treats, and follow these rules:

--The cats must not see each other.

--Exploring the house implies many treats and rewards, for a pleasant association.

Let Princess explore until she is once again happy and comfortable. Then, if all goes well, it's time to take it up a notch.



3 steps for introducing 2 cats without a fight

The introduction technique consists of 3 simple steps. In fact, the process is so simple that people often tend not to do it properly. You, however, will follow them to the letter!

Step #1: Make the cats comfortable without seeing each other. This means an isolation period for the new cat, during which it will get used to its new surroundings and human, without meeting the resident cat. If you've been following our advice up until now, you're ready for step #2.

Step #2: Prepare a bowl of very yummy food or treats for each cat, making sure that they're hungry at the moment. Open the door ever so slightly so that the cats can see each other without touching. Keep a hand on the door to close it if necessary. A baby gate or screen can also be used. Place one bowl in the new cat's room first, 1 or 2 meter(s) away from the door, then place the other bowl 1 or 2 meter(s) away on the other side of the door, for the resident cat. If you're not alone, assign one person per cat.

The trick here is to remember the saying 'when the appetite goes; everything goes'; all is well if both cats eat. Should either snub the food, move the bowls further away until they eat. You can then move the bowls closer to the door. Repeat at least once or twice a day, moving the bowls closer with each success, as long as both cats eat.

What you're seeking to achieve here is to create a pleasant association: when a cat sees the other cat, something good happens (hence why the food or treats must be delicious). Step #2 is over when both cats eat while facing each other through the slightly open door without growling, hissing, or batting.

Step #3: Once the cats eat in front of each other with minimal stress signals, move the bowls back to the starting point and open the door completely. Allow the cats to roam around the house freely, under supervision, offering plenty of treats whenever they cross paths. This will strengthen the pleasant association with the other cat.

Put the new cat away in its room when monitoring is impossible (during the night or work hours) to avoid issues. As soon as both cats display minimal stress signals when walking around supervised, official unsupervised cohabitation may begin!

Roommates without a hitch

At first, Princess and Queenie may hiss, growl, hit or chase each other. Let them figure out their own living arrangements to avoid future conflicts. Engaging in negotiations over coveted resources and expressing their feelings if the other cat gets in their bubble is normal and healthy, and it can get loud and scary. By interrupting, you are prolonging these necessary negotiations. Should a cat fight seem too intense, **DO NOT** get between the cats! Instead, toss a cushion near the cats, wait for them to split up and isolate them. When you get them back together, give them both plenty of tasty treats to make them forget about the other cat. If this doesn't work, isolate them immediately and call us.

While this seems heart-breaking, it's also possible that Princess may take Queenie's place. There is no justice or seniority in cats; you'll have to let it go.



Adult cats vs kittens

Kittens aged 3 to 5 months usually have an easier time adapting to change. This, however, doesn't guarantee an easy and fast introduction. When introducing cats, you must respect their individual pace. Going through the whole introduction process may take anywhere from a few days to several weeks, regardless of age, sex or breed. The cat that's slowest to adapt will determine how long it takes. Environmental enrichment is key to avoiding a generational clash between a rambunctious new kitten and a (usually) quieter adult.

Preventing unprovoked attacks

Skipping steps, going too fast, putting your emotions before the cats' needs or failing to see the signs of stress your cats are sending will prevent the positive association you seek to achieve and increase the risks of future conflicts. Taking the necessary time will allow for the relationship between your cats to be built on solid and pleasant grounds. There will always be some bickering, as the cats will need to adjust their routines and make compromises. However, if the introduction is successful, these negotiations will take place on the basis of tolerance or, sometimes, affection.

written by Karine Gelinas, Cat Educator and
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