



General care

Grooming - All kittens will benefit from regular grooming, particularly if long haired. Your pet shop will advise on a brush and comb suitable for your kitten's coat type.

Worming - Your kitten must be wormed regularly with a proprietary worming preparation.

Flea control - Regular flea treatments will be needed to prevent fleas and other skin parasites.

Vaccinations - Your kitten must be vaccinated against the infectious feline diseases: feline enteritis, 'cat flu' and feline leukaemia. Regular boosters will be required.

Neutering - If you are not going to breed from your cat it is advisable to neuter. Your vet will advise.

Insurance - Kittens should be registered with your vet and insurance against unexpected veterinary costs should be considered.

ID Chip - You should consider having your kitten micro-chipped. Your vet or other pet professional can advise you on this.



CARING FOR YOUR KITTEN



Shopping List

Food	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Food bowl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Water bowl	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toys	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basket/bed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bedding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Litter tray	<input type="checkbox"/>	Litter and scoop	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brush and comb	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carry cage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collar and tag	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scratching post	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worm/flea preparations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Book on cat care	<input type="checkbox"/>

This leaflet is produced by the Pet Care Trust, the national charity that promotes the benefits of pet ownership and education. For more information, go to www.petcare.org.uk, or phone 01234 273933.



Remember you must never release your pet into the wild.

Kittens are curious, intelligent and faithful. There are many pedigree breeds recognised by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy. There are also non pedigree kittens available that range in coat type and colour.

Most cats are kept as house pets with access to the outside, usually via a cat flap fitted to a rear door. However some cats are kept permanently indoors. These have special requirements and your pet shop will be please to advise.

Owning cats are a long term commitment

The average life span is 12-14 years.





Choosing and buying your kitten

When choosing a cat you must consider grooming requirements, the cost of feeding, health care, and holiday care.

You also need to decide between a pedigree kitten and domestic long or short hair.

There are many pedigree breeds recognised by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy.

When purchasing a pedigree kitten, make sure you receive the GCCF registration papers and a copy of the pedigree.

Your new kitten should be at least six weeks old, fully weaned and eating from its own dish. By this age your kitten will have a full set of milk teeth.

A healthy kitten should be:

- Bright and alert.
- Have no signs of discharge from eye, ears, mouth and nose.
- Have a clean anal area.
- Have a glossy coat with no bald patches and not have sores on the skin.
- Should move about easily, with no signs of lameness.



Housing

You should provide a sleeping bed or basket and suitable bedding. There is a variety of beds and bedding available and your pet shop will be pleased to advise.



Feeding and water

Your kitten will need separate bowls for food and water. These should be washed thoroughly every day. Your pet shop sells a wide range of canned, moist and dry foods that are balanced to meet your kitten's nutritional requirements for growing. If you make any changes to the diet be sure to do so over a period of time as sudden changes can cause stomach upsets.



Handling

Always pick your kitten up with one hand behind the front legs and the other holding the rear legs.

Settling in

When you take your kitten home, spend as much time with him as you can, giving lots of reassurance as he adjusts to his new surroundings. Your kitten should be given freedom to explore but not be allowed to go outside until he is fully settled in. He will also need times of undisturbed rest.

Introduce him to other pets and children gradually. Keep all doors and windows closed.

House training

Kittens are naturally clean and will normally use a litter tray. The litter must be changed regularly and the tray washed, disinfected and dried. There is a wide variety of litter trays and litters available. Your pet shop will be pleased to advise.

Toys

Your kitten will enjoy playing with toys. There is a wide variety to choose from, and your pet shop will be pleased to advise.

Cats also have a natural instinct to sharpen their claws regularly. To prevent damage to woodwork and furniture it is recommended that you buy a suitable scratching post.