

# Adoption Guide



[www.Kitty-Amour.com](http://www.Kitty-Amour.com)

678-234-3199

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# Introduction

## Congratulations on your Kitten!

Kitty Amour is committed to the happy adjustment of your new kitten in your home. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us! May you enjoy your newest family member for years to come!

### Step by Step

1. Take your kitten to the safe room.
2. Open the carrier and let him/her decide whether they want to come out to explore—they may come bounding out or it may take a few hours.
3. Visit often for feeding, litterbox cleaning and playing but let your kitten decide the pace of interactions. Limit the number of visitors who visit at once, so it isn't overwhelmed.
4. Give kitty at least 24 hours to adjust to you and the new environment before deciding to move on to letting it explore more of your house.
5. When kitty seems comfortable, running up to you to greet you at the door, eating and using the litter box, you can gradually let it explore the rest of the house one room at a time (close off bedrooms and other bathrooms). Always let him/her retreat to the safe room whenever it needs too. Shy kittens may need to be confined for several weeks before they are ready for more space.
6. Until it is more mature, remember to confine him/her to the safe room whenever you can't supervise.

Slow introductions are especially important if there are other cats in your home—for both your kitten's safety and the acceptance of the kitten by your resident cat. Be aware of the size difference between your kitten and adult cats and supervise play at all times. Give your adult cat a break from the kitten if he gets tired and annoyed by the energy level of the kitten.. As with dogs, slow introductions are also a must! Without proper and controlled introductions, your kitten could become injured.

# Safety

let's give your kitten every opportunity for success. As tempting as it might be, do not give your kitten the run of the house. Confine your kitten to a small "safe" place with a door or gate. This new safe place allows your kitten to gradually transition. Visit often to feed, play and talk as your kitten will stay here until it is completely comfortable, which could take days or weeks

## What items should be included in the "safe" room?

- Food (kitten dry and wet)
- Treats (kitten approved)
- Water and food bowls (stainless steel or ceramic—no plastic, as it holds bacteria)
- Litterbox and litter (place litterbox as far away from food, water, bed as possible)
- Interactive toys (fleece wand, Cat Catcher wand)
- Play-alone toys (jingle balls, soft mice, plastic rings)
- Scratching post or horizontal cardboard scratcher
- Cubby bed, hidey box, or cat carrier
- Kitty bed

## Kitten Proofing: Manage common household hazards.

- Close windows and doors to the outside. Are your screens secure? Supervise children and teach them to be careful opening and closing doors when they leave the house.
- Keep all plastic bags in drawers and away from your kitten.
- Keep strings, dental floss, yarn, thread, tinsel, rubber bands, hair ties, electrical wires, cords, necklaces, and anything similar out of your kitten's reach.
- Plants—many plants (especially bulb plants, lilies, onion and garlic) are poisonous to cats.
- Poisons and chemical rub-off—human medication (especially aspirin, acetaminophen and NSAIDS) are toxic to cats. Other medications, insecticides, rodenticides, paints, chemicals and chocolate can all poison your kitten.

Household cleaners that are ammonia or phenol based are particularly dangerous. Cats are fastidious groomers and will lick up any chemical residue on their fur or paws.

- Unsafe hiding places—block access to places where your kitten may get into and get stuck—behind stoves, washer and dryer (always check inside before operating), refrigerators, even small holes in the wall. Kittens have been known to get into cupboards and the walls by squeezing through plumbing openings for pipes!

# Socialization

## - Tips for keeping your cat social -

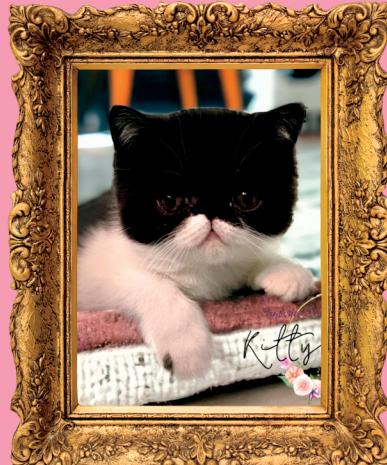
**Consistent, gentle handling:** Spend 2 or 3 brief sessions every day handling and petting your kitten. If she struggles, try pairing handling with a yummy treat.

**Positive reinforcement:** Use treats or something else your kitten loves and gradually work toward gently petting her all over (except tummy—often that's a no touch zone.) Get her comfortable with touch for nail trims and vet visits.

**Do not over pet:** if she becomes irritable from petting, she may resort to swatting, nipping or bunny kicking. Keep sessions brief using positive reinforcement and stop the session on a high note of enjoyment rather than waiting for signs of distress.

**Guest time:** Allow your guests to interact with your kitten as long as they comply with the "rules". Give your guest a wand toy to initiate play but let your kitten decide whether or not to approach your guest and play.

**Quality sleep:** Always allow your kitten uninterrupted sleepy time. Just like kids, their seemingly boundless energy requires recharging through sleep.



# Routines

Cats love routine and are creatures of habit. Even though they are diurnal (most active in the early morning hours and again at twilight), we can use their love of routine to our advantage. If you don't want a future of midnight antics and early morning bed pouncing with demands for food—shape your kitten's habits now.

- Play with your kitten every day at times that work for you. Play with her 30 minutes before you go to bed to tire her out and give part of the evening meal after the play session. Try to be as consistent as possible.

- Don't play in your bedroom—establish a special location for play (next to her cat tree is an ideal place).

- Pick up her toys and items she likes to play with at night and put them away.

- Place your kitten in her safe room. Ignore her meows for release, unless you suspect an injury or illness.

## Create a Routine

- Feed your kitten at the same times every day
- Play in the morning and the evening
- Talk to, pet and groom your kitten every day
- Reward your kitten for behaviors you like (treats)
- Clean the litterbox daily



# Playtime

- Play is using your kitten's prey drive in appropriate ways. Get an assortment of "prey" toys so you can vary the game—toys that look like and mimic the movements of birds, rodents, insects, and snakes. Some kittens prefer bird toys and some prefer mouse toys. You can mimic the various prey behavior with wand toys that you swing up in the air or drag and hide on the floor. Give your kitten time to engage her mind and plan her attack rather than just swat.

- Never use your hands to play—box or encourage your kitten to play bite your fingers. Always redirect play biting to a Kickaroo type toy, use a wand toy or throw balls across the room away from your body to redirect your kitten to appropriate play.

- Make it fun. Allow your kitten to make satisfying "captures" during play. For example, if using a wand laser toy, make sure to provide a treat or wet food at the end of the game. It is frustrating for your kitten to never actually catch her prey.

- End the game by slowly winding down the play. This sets off the end of the hunt response as the injured prey slowly "dies", lowering your kitten's excitement and energy level.

- Put all interactive toys away between play sessions as they should be reserved for playtime with you. Leave out jingle balls and furry mice that are safe for solo play.



# Health

## litter

- Scoop the box everyday—keep the litter box immaculate!
- Clean the entire box using mild (unscented) dish soap every 3-4 weeks.
- If using non-clumping litter, change litter every day.
  - All litter should be unscented.
  - Have one box per cat, plus one extra.
  - Two-story house—at least one on each floor.
- Big spaces need more boxes, little kittens won't go far to potty.
  - Use uncovered boxes.
- Place litter box in a quiet private area and away from food, water bowls and bedding. Don't:
- Do not use a box that is too small—it needs to be at least one and one half the length of your cat. Cats need room to turn around, dig and cover. That means you kitten will outgrow her original kitten size litterbox much like a puppy outgrows his original puppy collar.
- Do not use scented litter. Smells good to you, smells bad to cats.
  - Do not use a litterbox liner.
- Do not leave waste sitting in the litter box; nobody likes a dirty bathroom.
- Do not place a litterbox in a high-traffic or noisy area.
- Do not use strong chemicals or disinfectants to clean box.
  - Do not put litter boxes near noisy appliances.

## Veterinary Visits

- Vaccinations if needed (FVRCP every 3-4 weeks until at least 16 weeks of age). Then annual checkups and boosters.
- Possible de-worming protocol
- Flea control

Contact your  
Veterinarian if you see  
these issues:

- Not eating, drinking or using the litterbox regularly
  - Losing weight
  - Diarrhea
  - Vomiting
  - lethargic/stops playing
- Sneezing/heavy eye discharge
  - nasal discharge
- Shaking her head/scratching
- Stops grooming/coat looks less healthy
  - Missing fur