



Preparing Your Home for a New Kitten

There are many things to consider before bringing home a new kitten. We've compiled the following list to help you make your home safe, secure, and welcoming for your new family member.

Basic Supplies and Services:

- Litter Box & Scoop:** The basic rule for litter boxes is **one** litter box per cat in the household. The litter box should be easily accessible and scooped daily. Aluminum litter scoops are highly recommended.
- Litter:** Provide a non-clumping or pellet litter for young kittens. Kittens and babies explore the world in very similar ways - with their mouths. Until about 4 months of age, clumping litter could cause severe gastrointestinal problems if ingested.
- Carrier:** Each cat in your household should have its own carrier. Select a carrier that will be roomy enough for your kitten once he reaches adulthood (10-20 pounds). Thoroughly clean and disinfect your carrier with a pet-safe disinfectant.
- Food:** Kittens should have a kitten-specific dry food (not an "all stages of life" food) for their first 9-12 months. IBKR uses Royal Canin kitten products, both wet and dry, to give our kittens a healthy, nutritional start.
- Food and Water Dishes:** Stainless steel or glass dishes are best for all animals. Porcelain and ceramic bowls will absorb bacteria, even after being run through the dishwasher, which can lead to bacterial infections and other digestive health issues.
- Scratchers:** It's important to provide your kitten with both vertical and horizontal scratcher options. Replace the scratchers often to ensure that their claws always have a satisfying platform to stretch and scratch on.
- OPTIONAL Cat Tree:** Cat trees provide safe indoor climbing experiences for active kittens and can include scratchers, built in beds, hanging toys and more! NOTE: If you are planning to purchase a cat tree while your kitten is young, make sure the tree is no higher than 3 feet to avoid injury when jumping.
- Beds:** A cat bed will help your little one feel more comfortable in her new home. From a soft blanket in a box to a washable pet store bed, make sure your kitten has a clean spot they can return to feel safe and secure.
- Toys:** Toys are important for active cats and kittens. Each cat has their own preferences, but some good basic starting points are toys like:
 - Small chasers, like balls and toy mice, encourage a cat's natural pouncing, hunting and chasing instincts.
 - Wrestling toys help get out aggressive play, which saves your hands from sudden bursts of energy.
 - Wand toys allow you and your little one to bond during play.
 - Ball and track toys provide endless fun and fast play.

NOTE: For young kittens, please avoid toys with feathers, as these can break down and be ingested during play.

- Cleaning Supplies:** From accidents to upset tummies, messes happen! Keep some pet-friendly cleaning products on hand for when they do.
- Grooming Supplies:** Good grooming begins in kittenhood. Brushing your kitten regularly will reduce shedding and keep hairballs from forming in his stomach. Regular nail trims (we recommend doing this monthly) reduce the risk of harming furniture, humans, and themselves.
- Veterinary Care:** Unless otherwise noted, your kitten will have received two FVRCP vaccinations (series of 3). Adopters should schedule an appointment with their veterinarian for 2 weeks after their adoption date for the third and final shot of the series, and for their first rabies vaccine. IBKR also recommends that you have your kitten microchipped during this visit.
- Preventative Care:** Before going home, all kittens will have received flea control and dewormer. Discuss your options for continued flea and parasite prevention with a veterinarian who can help you choose the program that best fits your kitten's needs.

Kitten-Proofing Your Home:

- Electrical Cord Covers:** The cords to your phone charger, television, and computer are prime targets for teething kittens. Make sure all cords are out of reach or covered with cord covers. These can be found in a variety of lengths and colors at pet stores, electronics stores, hardware stores, or Amazon.
- Chemical Cleaners and Prescription Drugs:** Make sure all chemical cleaners, cleaning supplies, and prescription drugs are out of reach of curious paws.
- Toxic Plants:** Many common houseplants, from poinsettia to philodendron, are extremely toxic to cats. If you keep plants in your home, do some research on which are and aren't safe for your new feline friend.
- Easy to Reach Breakables:** Like a toddler, a kitten's curiosity will peak while exploring a new home. Make sure any valuable vases, picture frames, or collectibles are safely out of reach.
- Pest Control Measures:** Pest traps are not safe around kittens and should be discarded.