

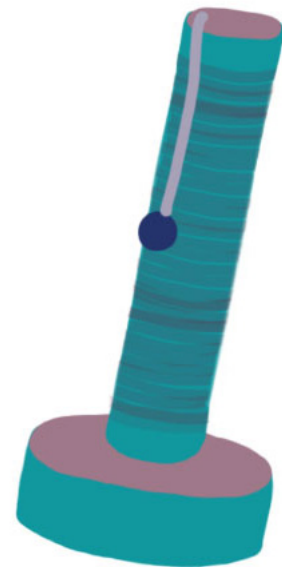
READY | SET | ADOPT

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE ADOPTING A CAT

So you've decided to find your forever friend. Great! The question is: are you ready? Approximately 3.4 million cats enter U.S. shelters each year, a staggering statistic, but one that means you've got a great opportunity to prepare for finding the perfect match. Age, size, and temperament are all important considerations, but how do you choose from among so many options? Luckily Alley Cat Rescue's got your back with this guide to cat adoption.

BASIC SUPPLIES

- Hard plastic carrier
- Litter box
- Food & water bowls
- Wet & dry food
- Scratching post
- Cat bed
- Safety/break-away collar
- Brush or comb
- Paper towels and non-toxic cleanser
- Variety of toys
- First-aid supplies including gauze rolls, antiseptic wipes & tweezers



CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS WISELY

Kittens are especially prevalent in shelters and rescues during the summer. They are cute, playful, and tons of fun! The process of watching your little friend grow up over time can feel very rewarding. On the other hand, caring for a kitten can require significant time and patience, especially if she was born feral and needs socializing. Their personalities can evolve and change over time too. It is often recommended to adopt kittens in pairs or have other cats at home who the kitten can play with, in order to continue their socialization.

If you adopt an adult cat, you can be pretty certain that the cat's personality will remain consistent. This is important if you are looking for a cat with specific qualities like playfulness, docility, or comfort around other animals. Generally, adult cats are calmer, require less attention than kittens, and already know the routines and rules of living indoors. Cats with dominant personality types may work better in a home by themselves or with other passive animals. Senior cats might fare better in quiet homes with few stresses like young children. Despite the misconception that cats can only bond with families if they were adopted young, you can definitely form strong bonds with adult cats.

TIPS ON CARING FOR YOUR NEW CAT

- Make sure that your cat has been spayed/neutered and vaccinated before coming home with you. Sterilization is an effective way to reduce problematic behaviors in your cat, such as vocalizing or marking, and helps to diminish overpopulation.
- Introduce your cat to the house bit by bit so that she won't be overwhelmed by the size and unfamiliarity of their environment. You can start her off in a single room or area with her food and water, litter box, and toys in consistent locations.
- Move slowly around your cat at first and avoid making startling noises. Use food (treats or wet food) as a means of connecting with your cat and creating positive associations. You can also play with your cat using interactive toys to help bring her out of her shell.
- Take your cat to the veterinarian for a regular checkup at least once per year.
- Talk to your vet about flea and tick medications for your cat. Even cats who live indoors can be vulnerable to fleas and ticks from the other animals or people coming in and out of the house.
- Groom your cat often with a brush or comb.
- Make sure that your cat has access to fresh, clean water at all times. Try a fountain if your cat is a finicky drinker. Canned wet food also provides significant moisture.
- Scoop the litter box at least once a day and routinely wash it with a diluted bleach solution. Remember the formula: one litter box for each cat in the home, plus one more.
- Pay attention to your cat's body language! Watching your cat's tail, ears, and eyes can teach you how she communicates and tell you how she's feeling. For example, if your cat has her tail up and ears forward, she is most likely content. If your cat's tail is down and ears sideways or back, she might be scared or anxious.
- Remember that every cat is unique and reacts to situations differently! Like with a family member or friend, there may be challenges to work through. But, with lots of patience and love, the bond with your new companion will be unforgettable!



More questions? Visit www.SaveACat.org for information on cat and kitten adoption, trap-neuter-return (TNR), spay/neuter, and more.



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