



ADOPTING A CAT concatulations! cat checklist

From: www.ontariospca.ca

Find out what your new cat needs

Welcome to the world of cats! You have years of wonderful companionship ahead with your new feline friend. This checklist of basic cat "must-haves," as well as your love and affection, will help you both get started on the right paw.

- **A veterinarian of your choice.** Ask friends and relatives who have pets if they can recommend a veterinarian. Ensure that the veterinarian's hours are suitable for your needs. Locate an emergency veterinary clinic in your area for after-hours illnesses or injuries.
- **If your kitten is not spayed or neutered, make an appointment with your veterinarian to have the surgery completed as soon as possible.** If you have adopted a kitten, ask your veterinarian about pediatric spay/neuter surgery, which can be performed on very young kittens - ten weeks of age - by most veterinarians. All cats of appropriate age are spayed or neutered at Ontario SPCA Branches before being adopted.
- **A quality cat litter and litter box, placed in an easily accessible but private spot.** If you have adopted a kitten less than six months of age, use only non-clumping cat litter. Kittens can be messy and occasionally clumping litter will stick to their feet and fur. While the kitten is cleaning himself, he will ingest the clumping cat litter, which can cause digestive and intestinal problems.
- **Stainless steel or ceramic food and water dishes.** Cats need plenty of fresh water daily. Be sure to place these dishes far from the litter box area. Cats are fastidious and may refuse to eat near their toilet area.
- **Good quality cat or kitten food.** Kittens should be fed three to four small meals each day. Adult cats should be fed once or twice each day. To prevent obesity, adult cats' food should be measured. Consult with your veterinarian to determine the appropriate amount of food for your cat.
- **If you plan to allow your cat to go outdoors while supervised, purchase a breakaway collar and identification tag, plus a harness and leash.** However, your cat will live a safer, healthier and longer life if kept strictly indoors.

- **A brush or comb for grooming your cat or kitten.** Cats may need help to keep their coats shiny and healthy. Ask the shelter staff, or a local groomer, about which type of comb or brush is best suited to your cat's coat.
- **Several safe toys to keep your cat happy, healthy and in shape.** If you purchase toys that include yarn, string or tinsel, be sure to supervise your cat at play. Ingestion of these materials can cause serious, and sometimes fatal, intestinal damage.
- **A scratching post is essential.** Provide her with a sturdy scratching post and place toys and catnip around it to entice her. Praise and reward her for using it. Your cat should be able to stretch fully when scratching, so ensure that the post is tall enough to accommodate her body length and her front legs. Some cats prefer to scratch wood rather than carpet, or sisal rope rather than wood; you may need to try several scratch posts before you find the one your cat likes best.

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