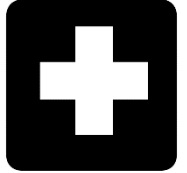


# How to care for your kitten

Congratulations on your new kitten! This tip sheet is intended for raising happy, healthy and well-adjusted kittens from age eight weeks and above. Typically, the USPCA does not allow adoption for kittens below eight weeks, as they require specialised care. Please seek additional advice if your kitten is younger than eight weeks old.



## Health

- Your kitten will require vaccinations (rabies and feline cocktail) at 12 weeks old and then annual boosters. Make an appointment for her to come and see the USPCA vet.
- Your kitten will also need deworming regularly- speak to the USPCA vet about the options available.
- Kittens reach sexual maturity at 5-6 months old. Book an appointment at the clinic for your kitten to be spayed or neutered in advance to avoid challenging behaviour (territorial spraying, scratching, running away, yowling) and unwanted litters.
- Kittens' health is very fragile as their immune systems are still developing. It is important to take any signs of illness seriously and act quickly. If your kitten develops diarrhoea or vomiting, immediately call the clinic or your preferred vet. You should also seek immediate veterinary advice if she doesn't eat for more than 24 hours.



## Food

- NEVER give your kitten or cat cow's milk, as she will be unable to digest it properly and it can make her very unwell. Ensure fresh water is always available.
- If you have the option to use pellets and sachets, only use the specified one for kittens. Packaged kitten food can be expensive, however try to use it until the kitten is at least 3 months old and longer if possible.
- If you want to cook for your kitten, you can try fish without bones or lean minced meat such as chicken. Boil the food without oil or salt.
- Feed your kitten 3-4 times per day. When fully grown you can provide two larger meals, twice a day.

## Behaviour

- Kittens, especially those 2-4 months old, are extremely playful and need lots of stimulation. Introduce simple toys such as ping pong balls and spend lots of time playing with her.
- Introduce boundaries straight away, don't wait until your kitten is older as this will be confusing for her. For example, if you do not want your kitten to go on your bed, enforce this from the start.
- Provide your kitten with a litter box. It should be low enough for her to easily get into. If it is not possible to use proper cat litter, sand can be used instead. Clean out the box regularly so your kitten wants to use it. Kittens will generally use litter boxes by instinct, however you can help teach her to use it by placing her in the box after meals and play sessions. Make sure the litter box is always available to your kitten.
- Never hit or shout at your kitten, instead reward positive behaviour with treats and praise. Always be patient!
- Introduce your kitten to the outside world slowly and carefully, and only after she has been vaccinated and enough time has passed for your kitten to build immunity.

