

Feeding

Kittens and cats may be "free fed," putting fresh dry food in their dishes once a day. A premium cat food especially formulated for the cat's age is recommended. Small treats are a good way to bond with your new cat or kitten. Fresh clean water should be available at all times.

Litter box

A litter box should be placed in a low-traffic, low-noise area separated from the food and water dishes. A small litter box with low sides should be used for a kitten, enabling the kitten to access the box. As the kitten grows the box should increase until the box is 1 1/2 times the length of the adult cat's body. Show your new cat or kitten a few times where the box is located. In a large home, several boxes will make it easier for the kitten or cat to find a box. Keep the box very clean by scooping out the solid waste at least once a day and for clay, changing the litter every other day. If you use scoopable litter change it every

week or so. If your kitty's box is clean, urinating or defecating outside the box could be a sign of a serious health or behavior problem. Contact your veterinarian if these issues occur.

Exercise and play

Cats and kittens can get plenty of exercise inside the home. Scratching posts, paper bags, catnip toys and rubber balls that can't be swallowed or torn apart are safe. Small or sharp objects, string, yarn or feathers are not suitable toys. These toys can be swallowed and cause intestinal blockage. Some toys may only be suitable if you are present and supervising the playtime.



Escondido Humane Society
3450 E. Valley Parkway
Escondido, CA 92027
www.escondidohumanesociety.org

Escondido Humane Society

Your new cat or kitten

**Helpful information to
ensure your cat becomes
a loving, lifelong
member of your family**



Visit us online at
www.escondidohumanesociety.org
for more cat resources

The Escondido Humane Society
Adoption Center is open from
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week.

Your new pet

Congratulations on your new pet! We have put together some helpful information to ensure your cat becomes a loving, life-long member of your family.

Meeting new people

All pets can experience stress in the transition to a new home, so it is best not to overwhelm them with too many new things. Introduce the new cat to the rest of the family gradually. It is advisable not to have too many people around at first. Isolating the cat with food, water, a bed and a litter box is best for the first few days. If you are unable to isolate the cat, at least provide a feeding and sleeping area away from house hold traffic and loud noise.

Meeting other pets

Exercise caution when introducing your new cat to the other animals in the household.

Since pets are territorial, other animals may feel jealous or threatened. Introduction should be slow and gradual. Separate the new cat by placing it in a room by itself with food, water, a bed and a litter box. The resident cat will smell the newcomer under the door. After about a week, you could switch the cats' locations. The newcomer will have the run of the house to explore and familiarize itself with its new surroundings while the resident cat is isolated. Place the new cat's bedding in the room with the resident cat and place the resident cat's bedding where the new cat can sniff it. When a face-to-face interaction takes place, be prepared to intervene if necessary. Do not leave the cats unattended until you are assured they are comfortable together. Always provide high places for cats to retreat to.

Children and pets

Instruct all children in the household about the proper way to handle the new cat.

Very young cats and kittens can easily be injured or killed by the affections of an overzealous child. Also, with the excitement of a new pet, children often need to be reminded that they can overwhelm the cat. If care is not taken, the cat may react instinctively by hiding, urinating inappropriately, growling, scratching or biting. Let the cat approach the children first, when the cat has grown accustomed to them. Don't encourage a child to seek out a cat that is hiding; let the cat come out on its own. Cats are loving, trusting, social creatures that thrive on interaction with other living beings, human and non-human. Because they are socialized to co-habit with their human families, they require regular attention and love in addition to the basics of food, water, shelter and health care. The quality of your relationship with your cat depends on all of these factors, and being a good pet parent means meeting all of them.