



Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

When you bring your new cat or kitten home

Settling in

Before you bring your adopted cat or kitten home, prepare its sleeping area. The basic requirement is a warm and secure place which can be anything from a commercially available bed or basket to a cardboard box with an entrance hole and a blanket.

Food and water bowls should be provided and placed in a familiar and safe area; a litter tray should also be provided. Cats are fussy about cleanliness and will not use a soiled litter tray so it is essential to clean the tray regularly.

Cats like to explore their new surrounds but it is advisable to keep the cat or kitten indoors for at least the first few weeks. In the case of a kitten at least a month is recommended.

Cats are also naturally playful animals and enjoy having a few simple toys to play with.

Nutrition

A balanced diet is essential for your cat's health and wellbeing. An all meat diet is not sufficient and will result in your cat or kitten suffering nutritional deficiencies and growth problems. High quality prepared cat food (both canned and dry) is the most reliable and convenient way to ensure your cat has a balanced diet.

Kittens have different nutritional requirements to adult cats and it is preferable to feed your kitten specially formulated kitten foods in both canned and dry forms. Milk is unnecessary for cats and may cause diarrhoea in some cats which have a lactose intolerance; a low lactose cat milk is available at supermarkets.

Vaccination

Your cat or kitten should be vaccinated against *feline enteritis*, *cat flu* and *feline leukaemia virus*. These diseases can be fatal and they are preventable. Kittens should be vaccinated between six - nine weeks of age and again at between 12 - 16 weeks. All cats require a booster vaccination every 12 months. Many cat boarding facilities will not accept cats that do not have up to date vaccinations.

Your vet can provide a certificate as proof of vaccination.

Parasites

Cats and kittens need to be wormed regularly to control roundworms, hookworms and tapeworms which live in the intestine. A variety of tablets, liquids and pastes are available.

Fleas and ticks are often a problem during the warmer months. When treating a cat or kitten for fleas, only use products specially formulated for cats and follow the directions on the packaging. The cat's bedding and any other pets should be treated at the same time.

Paralysis ticks occur in some parts of Australia (including the Hawkesbury) and these can be fatal to cats. You should check your cat daily and remove any ticks and consult your vet if you do find ticks.

Abscesses

These are common in cats due to fighting and can show up as a swelling or discharging sore anywhere on the cat. Veterinary attention is required to treat abscesses.

Training

Cats are highly intelligent and can be trained to show desirable behaviour rather than undesirable behaviour. A scratching post should discourage your cat from scratching your furniture. But if it does scratch items other than a post, a firm 'no' and a spray of water should stop such behaviour.

Grooming

Cats spend a great deal of time grooming themselves, but long haired cats should be brushed and combed several times a week.

 This document contains important information. If you do not understand it, contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.



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Saturday 9:30am-11:30am
Sunday 7am-9am
Public Holidays 7am-9am

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