

Is this the right pet for me?

A cat brings you, and your family, a wealth of love and enjoyment to be shared for many years, so it is important to choose your new cat carefully. Don't choose a cat on looks alone - find out about the temperament, activity level, and special requirements of different breeds from cat owners and breeders. There is little to choose between male and female cats once they have been desexed - both will make affectionate, home-loving pets. Long-haired cats can be very attractive but they need regular grooming to keep their coat in good condition. Think Adoption First™ by considering adopting a homeless cat from your local animal welfare shelter.

Recommended for...

- People wanting an independent feline Best Friend
- Singles, couples, families with children
- People living in apartments

Lifespan

12-16 years or more

Medications

- intestinal worm treatment
- flea control

Feeding

Feed a high quality cat food that is palatable, easy to eat and supplies complete and balanced nutrition.

How much and how often you feed your cat will depend on its age, breed, individual characteristics and what you are feeding. Generally two meals a day - morning and evening - should be sufficient. Follow the manufacturer's feeding guide on the packaging to work out how much to feed daily. Cats are unlikely to over eat and will graze on their food throughout the day.

If you want to change your cat's diet, wait until it has settled in, and then introduce the new diet gradually over a period of four to five days. Avoid feeding your cat sugary foods or dairy products.

Keep your cat's food and water bowls clean and separate from the family's dishes. Cool, fresh water should always be available.



NEW CAT CHECKLIST

Here's a list of the essentials you'll need for your new cat. Please ask any of the Best Friends Team to help you with your selections.

Essential equipment

- a warm, draught-free, cat bed or basket lined with warm soft bedding
- 2 unbreakable bowls for food and water
- premium kitten food
- cat litter, litter tray & litter scoop
- a light collar (and lead if you are considering walking your kitten)
- identification tag for name and phone number
- bell(s) for the collar (to discourage hunting behaviour)
- cat travel cage

Your cat will also appreciate:

- a great selection of toys to chew, hide, chase and catch
- a cat scratching post or other special cat furniture
- a cat flap for easy access to the outdoors
- nail clippers
- cat treats (for training - yes, cat's & kittens can be trained!)
- grooming brush (especially for long haired kittens)
- an outdoor enclosure

Special Offer:

Joanne Hewett
 **BestFriends**™
Pet SuperCentre

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Caring for your Cat



 Joanne Hewett
BestFriends™
Pet SuperCentre





Bringing your cat home

Choose a name before your cat arrives and use it often. A new environment can be quite frightening for a cat, so ensure you release them in a small area they can explore without any tempting nooks and crannies to hide in.

For the first couple of weeks allow your cat to get used to their new home by confining them to the house so they can become familiar with the environment and feeding and sleeping routine. If you have other pets, introduce them slowly to your new cat under close supervision. To avoid jealousy, make sure you do not neglect your other pets.



Kids care

Never allow children to tease your cat or handle it roughly and remember, cats and young children should always be supervised. Remind them that cats need plenty of rest but in between times they can enjoy its natural playfulness. Children should be taught to always wash their hands after playing with the cat.

Housing

Cats need a comfortable bed, which may be a well-lined box, basket or cat igloo. It is recommended that cats be kept indoors from dusk to dawn each day to prevent them from straying, fighting or hunting. Check your local government as in some areas there may be stricter regulations for keeping cats indoors at all times.

Toilet Training

Cats are naturally clean, so toilet training is usually a simple process as they will instinctively look for a private place – like a litter tray – to go. Cats tend to be rather shy about their toilet habits and like to relieve themselves in private. Provide at least one litter tray indoors, in a place that is not a busy thoroughfare. The litter tray should not be placed near the cat's feeding bowls. Clean out the litter tray regularly (wearing gloves) and always wash your hands thoroughly afterwards. A litter mat, newspaper or cardboard may be placed under the tray to catch any scattered litter or buy a litter tray with a hood. Alternatively, your cat should have ready access to the outside preferably by means of a cat flap.

Grooming

Cats naturally like to keep themselves clean and short haired breeds require little grooming. If your cat is long haired, you must be prepared to groom their beautiful coat daily. If grooming is neglected for any length of time, tangles and matts will occur, which require expert attention.

Cats use their sharp claws for climbing and self defence, and like to keep in good condition. A scratching post or specially designed cat furniture is a good investment or otherwise your cat may start using your furniture to exercise its claws. Make sure the post is tall enough so that your cat can reach upwards with its front paws - above its head - and still have room to stretch and grab. The most interesting scratching posts are those which have different kinds of surfaces. Encourage and praise your cat when it uses the post and squirt it with a spray bottle of water when it uses something else.

Exercise

Cats generally exercise themselves and will run wildly around the house at times. Your cat can be encouraged to exercise more by playing with toys and providing access to larger areas, but unlike dogs, they don't need to be walked. If you let your cat exercise outside during the day, be sure to bring it in at dusk, as in some local areas this is compulsory requirement of having cats and kittens.

Play time is the perfect opportunity to build a strong bond with your cat. Cats like to play with toys such as fluffy mice, little balls, fishing toys and other interesting things. Some toys include the herb catnip which most cats and kittens love. Have a variety of these on hand and rotate them often. Avoid anything with loose strings or small parts that may be swallowed.

Training

Part of your cat's charm is its independence and free spirit. This also means that cats are less responsive to training than dogs. However, cats can still be trained to display desirable rather than undesirable behaviour to ensure they fit in with your household.

Remember, choose a name for your cat before it arrives and use it every time you play with, pat, feed or groom your cat. Decide which behaviours are not acceptable e.g. jumping up on kitchen benches, sleeping on beds. The most effective way to discipline your cat is to use a gruff, loud tone of voice and to keep a water pistol or plant sprayer handy to be used the instant the undesirable behaviour occurs. Always remember to praise and reward good behaviour and never chase or hit a cat.

Travelling with your cat

It is important that your new cat is safely restrained when travelling in your car. Your cat should be placed in a sturdy travel cage, which has plenty of newspaper in the bottom and a small water container attached to it. Your cat may feel more comfortable if the carry cage is covered with a light cloth. Never leave a cat in a closed, stationary car - even in cool weather, as the interior of a car can become extremely hot!

If you take your cat away with you, keep it securely indoors to prevent it straying or fighting with other cats.

Health

Regular health checks will help your cat to live a long and happy life. Whether your cat needs a vaccination, dental care or anything else, you can go to the OurVet™ counter in store and talk to the Team. OurVet™ can also advise you about dental health, coat care, or any other issues that concern you.

Your cat should have been vaccinated to protect it from potentially fatal diseases. Keep your cat's vaccination record in a safe place and note when the next vaccination is due.

Parasite Control: All cats need to be wormed regularly to remove parasitic worms which live in the intestine. Ask at the OurVet™ counter about the best worming products for your cat.

Fleas and ticks are common external parasites that cause skin irritation and other more serious problems in cats, especially during the warmer months. Usually a combination of products is required to control them. The OurVet™ team can give you specific advice on the most suitable approach for controlling external parasites on your cat.

Desexing: OurVet™ highly recommends that you have your cat desexed. Cats are generally healthier and more sociable pets if desexed.

Emergency Treatment during the guarantee period: If your cat develops diarrhoea which persists for more than 24 hours, or becomes severe, or has any other health problems during the guarantee period, please contact the team at OurVet™ in store or your nearest veterinarian.

Identification

Best Friends Pet SuperCentre recommends you have your cat microchipped for permanent identification. A tiny microchip is placed under the skin, which works in a similar way to a bar code and allows your cat to be traced back to you should it become lost. Microchip identification is compulsory for registration of cats in Victoria.

Unfortunately some cats do get lost. Make sure your cat always wears a collar, which has an identifying name and telephone number and a registration tag if this is required by your local government. You can also register your cat with organisation such as the National Pet Registry who will provide a free pet tag with a 1800 number to help return your cat to you if it gets lost and found.

If your cat is lost, contact your local pound, council, animal shelter (such as The Lost Dogs Home & Cat Shelter) and veterinary clinics, as lost pets are often taken there.

Responsible pet ownership

In most areas of Australia you are required by law to register your cat. In some cases there are restrictions on the number and types of pets you are allowed to keep and cats must be kept confined at certain times. Check with your local government for further information on your rights and responsibilities both to your cat and to your neighbours.

Best Friends Pet Guarantee: At Best Friends Pet SuperCentre we take the utmost care of all animals living under our roof to ensure they are happy and healthy whilst in our care. After purchase, if you are not satisfied with the health of your new pet or you are having second thoughts on pet ownership, you can return your pet to us with the receipt within 14 days of purchase for vet treatment*, refund or replacement pet†. We are unable to provide a refund for any equipment you purchased and have used for your pet during this time. * Vet treatment includes 1 free consultation and appropriate treatment for illnesses that are considered by OurVet™ to have been present in the pet and have further developed after the pet was sold. New illnesses and injuries that have occurred after the pet was sold are not covered. Treatments provided are at the sole discretion of Best Friends & OurVet™. †Replacement Pets are offered at the same value as original pet purchased.