

KITTEN CARE 101: BEHAVIOR



Socialization

Take things slowly with introducing new people and new animals. Make sure she has a safe place she can go to if she gets overwhelmed—this can be her carrier or the room where her food, water and bed are. Don't force her to interact with a new person if she doesn't want to. It's important to keep early experiences positive!

- Kittens are naturally curious! Limit their area of exploration to one room initially, then after a few days, slowly allow access to other areas of the home
- Give cats one to two weeks to smell each other in the house before introducing them
- The prime socialization period for cats occurs between 2 and 12 weeks of age
- Pheromone products can help with introductions

Playtime

Kittens have a lot of energy and very sharp teeth and claws!

- Don't use your hands or feet as toys during play—always use toys or wands with feathers they can chase.
- If your kitten tries to play with your hands, fold your arms and look away. Wait a few minutes before giving her any more attention. Try this for your feet, too.
- Always allow the kitten to “catch” the toy a few times so she won't get frustrated.
- Small balls with bells make great kitten toys. Put one in a clean bathtub with her and let her chase the ball around and around.

My kitten is becoming destructive, what can I do?

Nail clipping may need to be done one to two times per week!

- Tips can be trimmed with sharp nail trimmers made for dogs and cats to not crush the nail
- If you take too much off the nail, you will cut into the “quick” and bleeding and pain will occur - always have styptic powder/clotting substance available
- You should be able to see the pink of the quick through the nail so avoid the pink area and you should be safely away from the quick
- Commercially available nail shields or caps (Soft Paws), generally made of smooth plastic, attach to end of the nail with special glue



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Never punish your kitten, or she will become nervous and fearful!

If you need to correct a behavior, like scratching your couch, clap your hands, shake a can with marbles in it, or gently and quickly spray with water from a spray bottle. Pheromone products like Feliway can be used to deter your kitten from scratching furniture; redirect her behavior by taking her to her scratching post.

Litter Boxes

Cats are naturally clean animals, and most kittens take to litter boxes quickly. We recommend putting the litter box in a quiet, low traffic area. Make sure it's easy for your kitten to find, so she doesn't get frustrated and have an accident. Use an uncovered litter box, unscented litter and if you have more than one cat, one litter box per cat plus one.

Clean it every day—her nose is much more sensitive than yours is, and she won't use a stinky box! Set her up for success now, so she won't get in the habit of finding inappropriate places to relieve herself!

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Owning a pet can be a rewarding experience, but it is also a responsibility that lasts the lifetime of the animal. Got questions or want to schedule an appointment? Give us a call at (919) 380-1157. We look forward to watching your kitten grow into a happy, healthy cat!



Prevention is your best bet for a healthy pet and peace of mind.

Talk to a member of our staff or your Lake Pine veterinarian about
vaccinating your best friend today!

Not sure if your pet's shots are current? Give us a call at (919) 380-1157.