

Care of your New Kitten

Your new kitten will be used to the company of the other Kittens and Cats in our household and might take a few days to get used to his/her new companions. It can take anything between 5 minutes and 5 days for them to settle with their new friends. When you get home with your kitten, put him/her in a safe room with doors and windows closed and make sure he /she can't get access to the chimney! Give him/her a litter tray. She/he will be trained to use this but should be encouraged by placing in the tray from time to time, especially after sleeping or eating, and if the kitten should have an 'accident' elsewhere, which very unlikely, then he/she should NEVER have their nose rubbed in it, but should be gently placed back into the tray, and should be praised for using the tray). Make sure that fresh water is available for the kitten to drink, never give cow's milk - this can upset their tummies, if you do want to give milk as a treat then get milk made especially for cats from the pet department of a supermarket, or a pet shop). Offer some dry food. When your new kitten has had a chance to settle for a while (noise and excitement will frighten it at first), introduce the other animals, the most placid first, making sure there is somewhere safe or your kitten to retreat to. This could be the open carrier that it came in. If it does retreat to a 'safe area' then make sure it isn't cornered by other animals, or children, in the household. Never hold the kitten or the established cat when introducing them because they feel they can't get away if they need to.

Your kitten will be used to being fed wet food at approximately 8am, 12 o'clock mid day, 5pm and last thing at night. Feed as close to these hours as is convenient to you, but make sure there is always plenty of dry food down during the day and night. And, of course, fresh water. Our kittens are all sold as indoor cats, if windows were left open, they will jump out - they can leap very high. If you want to open windows, we would suggest you obtain screens . A young kitten is more than capable of jumping 4 or 5 feet - so don't think they will be safe if you leave a top window open. They are also very capable of jumping on a door handle and opening the door, so if you open a window and then close the door you could well find your cat has opened it and got out of the window. I know of a case where a kitten - not one of ours - actually opened a door, ran up on to the windowsill, and fell out of the first floor window. One we bred was found on a first floor windowsill, having climbed out of the window.

Young kittens are very likely to get underfoot, so be careful about stepping backwards because he could quite likely be sitting right behind you. Also, they dash about in front of feet when young, so it's a constant case of being aware of where you walk. If you think this is difficult with one or two kittens, give us a thought with a whole litter! We get used to sort of shuffling about!

An extra few words of warning here - NEVER LEAVE THE LID TO THE TOILET OPEN - kittens jump up on to things, assuming there is a solid surface, and some have been heard of drowning by falling into the toilet. And NEVER RUN HOT WATER INTO THE BATH FIRST AND LEAVE IT UNATTENDED - I have a photo of what happened when a kitten, not one of ours, jumped into scalding water. Also, we're always really careful to never leave sharp knives etc. around, or staples, or paper clips or anything else that a cat could hurt themselves with. In fact, if you imagine the kitten to be like a two year old child, and what they can get up to, this would be about right. Never leave washing machine doors or tumble dryers open - cats and kittens will climb inside and several have been killed in a horrible way.

A word about candles. Candles are OUT. Candles are a huge risk to cats and kittens, as are open fires, or any sort of uncovered flame. If you have a cooker where the top will stay hot when the pan is taken off, then if the cat has any chance of getting near it, cover the hot area with a pan of cold water while it cools down.

We hope this information will help you to help your new feline friend during his/her first days with you.

For further help and advice on the care of your new kitten please visit our website www.geniemau.com and go to links.