



ORPHANS OF THE STORM®
animal shelter

**Congratulations on your new furry family member, and
welcome to the Orphans family!**

First, thank you for choosing to adopt. Second, thank you for letting us help you find your new family member at Orphans of the Storm!

This folder contains some important and useful information that will help you start off on the right foot with your new companion. Be sure to look through it thoroughly, as it will help answer many questions and concerns.

We LOVE updates, so please send stories and pictures to:
info@orphansofthestorm.org
[Facebook.com/orphansofthestorm](https://www.facebook.com/orphansofthestorm)
[Instagram.com/orphansofthestorm](https://www.instagram.com/orphansofthestorm)

If you have any remaining questions or concerns, please contact us at:
(847)945-0235
Open 12-4pm Wednesday-Friday, Saturday/Sunday 12-5
Holiday hours may vary

-The Orphans of the Storm Team

Adopted Cat FAQ

What should I feed my new cat?

Unless the cat has a special diet (like a prescription food), we feed whatever food is donated. We recommend consulting your veterinarian or asking for recommendations from the pet supply store. Our biggest recommendation is to feed both wet and dry food (separately), as wet food helps keep cats hydrated. Once you pick a food, stick to it. Your new cat may have an upset stomach the first few days, but this is normal. Changing food too often after arriving home can cause more stomach issues.

How much should I feed my new cat?

Please refer to the feeding guide on the food you purchase. Keep in mind that, while these guidelines will get you started, you will want to adjust the amount of food you feed in the future. The amount of calories you feed should account for both dry and wet food. Work with your vet to find the right amount of food to keep your cat healthy and happy.

What do I need when I pick up my new cat?

You will need your paperwork (or a digital copy of it) and a carrier. You may purchase a cardboard carrier from the shelter if you are taking your cat home immediately after adoption, but you will still need to invest in a suitably sized soft sided or plastic carrier for future vet visits.

How do I get a local rabies tag/certificate?

If your cat already has a rabies shot upon adoption (rather than getting vaccinated going home), you will need to transfer the certificate and tag to be in your name through your local animal control. Contact your county's animal control office to find out how to transfer it. There is typically a small fee (about \$5-10) to transfer the information.

What should I do if my new cat isn't feeling well?

Check out the certificates included in your adoption pack! Our veterinary partners offer discounts to recently adopted animals from OOTS. If you have been advised that your cat is currently being treated for something, we will provide you with the medication and further instructions on treatment.

When is my new cat's birthday?

We prefer "Gotcha" Days! Most of our cats are strays, which means we don't know the day they were born, just an approximate age. Though we love our pets everyday, it is nice to have a specific day especially for them. Most rescue cat owners will celebrate their Gotcha Day because that is the day they became family!

The First 30 Days with Your New Cat

Day 1:

Do not let your cat loose when you get home! The world is a big, overwhelming place for a kitty. Set up a safe place or “home base” for your new cat. This can be a bathroom, office, etc. The ideal room will have minimal furniture to hide under and a secure, closed door.

You will want to cat-proof and set up this room:

- **Block access to all spaces under furniture**
 - Play kitty- get on your knees and look from a cat's point of view- see any hiding places?
- **Put away any dangerous cords or substances**
- **Provide appropriate hiding spots**
 - Covered kitty beds
 - A covered box
 - A chair with a blanket over it
- **Set up the essentials**
 - Food and water bowls
 - Litterbox
 - Bed/blankets

This will be your new cat's first experience in your house. Make sure it is a peaceful and quiet retreat, away from guests and other pets. They will be spending the first few weeks here.

Phase 1

Keep your new pet in their “home base” as they adjust. Make short, frequent visits with them and talk to them in a calm voice. If you have other pets, give the new cat a towel to lay on and give your other pets another towel to lay on. During your visits with the new cat, switch the towels so that the new and resident animals can get used to the new scents.

During this phase, work on building your new cat's confidence and comfort with human family members visiting.

Phase 2

Soon, your new cat will become curious about the world outside their room. This is the time to start letting them explore the house while you are home and supervising.

If you have other animals, start by bringing the new cat out in a carrier or cage for short visits throughout the day. It is also helpful to let the new cat begin to visit the rest of the house while the other pets are confined to another room. Once the caged visits go on without signs of aggression, let the new cat start to venture out while the other pets are present. Be sure to provide plenty of vertical space (climbing trees, shelves, tables, etc.) for the cat to get away from the other animals and keep dogs on leash.

DO NOT leave a new animal alone with your resident pets during this phase.

Phase 3

This is the point where the new cat starts to feel like a part of the family. You can begin to relax your watch on them. It is still best not to leave them alone with other pets until you are absolutely comfortable with how they are interacting.

Remember: Patience is key!

All cats have different personalities and confidence levels. Some cats may breeze through these steps. For others, it may take weeks. Please be patient as your new kitty adjusts to their new home and family.

THE 3/3/3 RULE OF ADOPTING A CAT



3 DAYS

3 WEEKS

3 MONTHS

TO DECOMPRESS

Big change

- Trying to figure out their new environment/routine/family
- A consistent routine is VERY important
- Scared or unsure of what is going on

Feeling overwhelmed

Your new cat may:

- Not eat or drink
- Drink water excessively
- Have accidents
 - Miss the litterbox, engage in marking, or pee or poop in a hiding place
 - Pee on objects associated with a specific person
- Vocalize like yowling
- Shut down or hides under furniture
- Not engage in play or social behaviors
- Be destructive
- Other problem behaviors may occur

Physical stress signs

- Dilated pupils
- Wide eyes
- Whiskers pointed toward body
- Ears back
- Tail tucked

TO LEARN ROUTINE

- Starting to respond to routine cues
- May still hide but coming out more
- Should use litterbox consistently (adults)
- Reduction in stress signs
- May still not engage in play or social behaviors
- Other problem behaviors may occur
 - Consider seeking professional help
- Find resources at pasadenahumane.org/behavior
- You should be beginning to see if this is a "match"



TO START TO FEEL AT HOME

- Should understand routine and have adapted
- Should engage in natural behaviors
 - Scratching, purring, kneading
 - Slow stretches, relaxed body
 - when walking around
- Taking treats gently
- House soiling should be resolved (adults and older juveniles)
 - If adults/juveniles are house soiling
 - Speak to a vet
 - If medical concerns are ruled out, speak to a training professional
- Other problem behaviors may occur
 - Consider seeking professional help
- Find resources at pasadenahumane.org/behavior
- You should be more confident this is a match

CAT RESOURCES

We at Orphans of the Storm are here to support our adopters and their new family members.

However, when behavior concerns arrive, we highly recommend reaching out to a qualified, professional trainer whenever possible. Please see the resources below for general information on solving behavior concerns.

Resources for Cats:

- Litterbox Issues

- Cat Not Using Litter Box: Causes and Solutions

(<https://bit.ly/BFASLitterbox>)

- Litter Box Problems (<https://bit.ly/ASPCALitterbox>)

- Not getting along with other cats

- Cat Aggression Toward Other Cats: Steps for Changing Aggressive Feline Behavior (<https://bit.ly/BFASCat2Cat>)

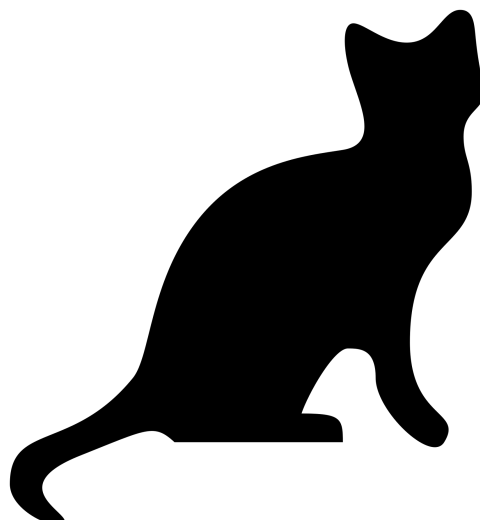
- Aggression Between Cats in Your Household

(<https://bit.ly/ASPCACat2Cat>)

- Noisey Cats

- Why Does My Cat Meow So Much? (<https://bit.ly/BFASLoudCat>)

- Meowing and Yowling (<https://bit.ly/ASPCALoudCat>)



The Ultimate New Cat Checklist

Feeding Station: Nutrition is the Key to Health!

- Wet Food
- Dry Food
- Food bowl
- Water bowl
- Feeding station mat- to catch spills
- Treats

Bathroom Essentials

- Litter
- Litterbox
 - If covered, keep cover off until cat understands where it is
- Litter mat (Goes under the box and keeps the litter from getting all over your house)
- Scoop for litter
- Small trash can for litter scooping- lined

Health and Beauty

- Carrier for vet visits
- Nail clippers
- Brushes- Check out the Furminator to fight shedding and a dematting tool for long hair cats
- Pet wipes for bigger messes
- Consider a pheromone diffuser like Feliway to help with the transition into your home

Playtime and Naptime

- Bed- many cats like covered, den-like beds
- Blankets
- Toys
- Cat tree
- Scratch post
- Scratch box

INTRODUCING YOUR NEW CAT TO YOUR RESIDENT CAT

While some are more social than others, cats are wonderful companions to each other. An 8-year-old cat that has never been around other animals may need several weeks or even months to learn to share her territory (and her people) with other pets in the household. However, a very young or very social cat may need only a few days. Cats are territorial and need to be introduced slowly in order to give them time to get used to each other before there is a face-to-face confrontation. Slow introductions help prevent fearful and aggressive problems from developing.

Confinement

Confine your new cat to one medium-sized room with her litter box, food, water and a bed. Feed your resident cat and the newcomer on opposite sides of the door to this room. This will help both of them to associate something enjoyable (eating!) with each other's smells. Don't put the food so close to the door that the cats are too upset by each other's presence to eat. Gradually move the dishes closer to the door until your pets can eat calmly, directly on either side of the door.

Swap Scents

As long as neither cat is sick, the second step is swapping scents. Switch sleeping blankets or beds between your new cat and your resident cat so they have a chance to become accustomed to each other's scent. Rub a towel on one cat and put it underneath the food dish of the other cat. You should do this with each cat in the house.

Switch Living Areas

Once the new cat is using her litter box and eating regularly while confined, let her have free time in the house while confining your other cat(s) to the new cat's room. This switch provides another way for the animals to experience each other's scents without a face-to-face meeting. It also allows the newcomer to become familiar with her new surroundings, without being frightened by the other cats.

Contact Stage

Do short, supervised meetings, then increase the time together based on observable behavior.

Avoid Fearful and Aggressive Meetings

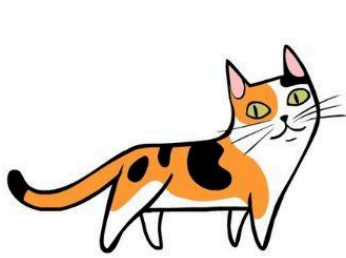
Avoid any interactions between your cats that result in either fearful or aggressive behavior such as growling, hissing, swatting, chasing, or stalking. If these responses are allowed to become a habit, they can be difficult to change. It's better to introduce your cats to each other gradually so that neither animal becomes afraid or aggressive. If either cat becomes fearful or aggressive, separate them, and start over with the introduction process in a series of very small, gradual steps, as outlined above.

Tips

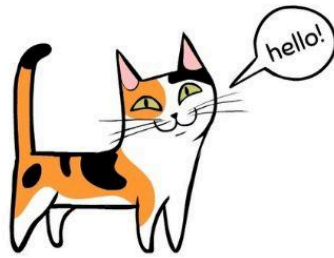
- If one of your cats has a medical problem or is injured, this could stall the introduction process. Check with your veterinarian to be sure that all of your cats are healthy, especially if you have adopted this cat from a shelter.
- You should have at least one litter box per cat plus one, and you'll need to clean all of the litter boxes more frequently. Make sure that none of the cats are being "ambushed" by another while trying to use the litter box.
- Try to keep your resident cats' schedule as close as possible to what it was before the newcomer's appearance.
- Your goal is to avoid any outright fights, but if small spats do occur between your cats, you shouldn't attempt to separate the cats by picking up one cat or getting between them with your hands or body parts. Instead, either make a loud noise to separate the cats or throw a blanket over them. Then give them a chance to calm down and go back to the steps in the introduction process.
- Make sure to avoid punishment. It won't work and could make things worse.
- Be sure each cat has a safe hiding place from the other.
- You can also use anxiety reducing remedies to assist in the introduction. See our handout: "Stress Relief for Your Pet."

When to Get Help

If the introductions don't go smoothly, seek professional help right away. See our handout: "When the Helpline Can't Help." Animals can be severely injured in fights, and the longer the problem continues, the harder it can be to resolve. However with professional help, conflicts between pets can often be resolved.



INTERESTED



FRIENDLY



ATTENTIVE



RELAXED



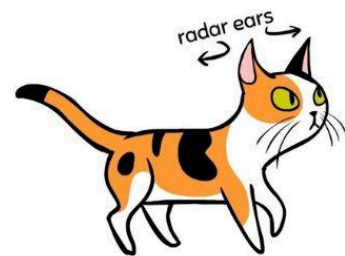
TRUSTING



FRIENDLY, RELAXED



CONTENT



CONFLICTED, CAUTIOUS



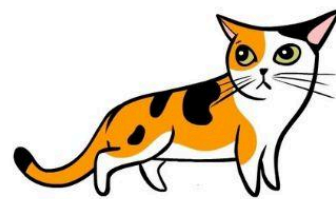
PLAYFUL



EXCITED



"THIS IS MINE"



ANXIOUS



PREDATORY



WORRIED



FRIGHTENED



THREATENED



TERRIFIED



SUPER TERRIFIED



IRRITATED



DISGUSTED

Interactive CAT Play

by Dr. Mikel Delgado

BORING



Toys that are left lying on the floor are “dead”. They are boring. Fun toys are like **prey**! They are usually small and quiet, and **they move**!

Playing is an **interactive** experience: a simulated hunting experience that gives cats physical exercise and stimulates their brains. We tailor our play to our individual cat's needs. Are they a generalist or a specialist?

Playing is also a way to **bond** with our cat. Not all cats like to be cuddled.

Make play a daily habit or activity. eg, before their dinner or bedtime, and whenever they have the zoomies! Just as dogs need to go out for walks and to sniff, cats need **enrichment** and shouldn't be sleeping all day.

Prey Types

for the SPECIALIST HUNTER*

feathers eg, Da Bird



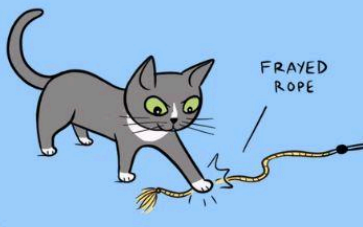
mouse-like eg, Cat Catcher



bug-like eg, Cat Dancer



snake-like eg, Bamboozler



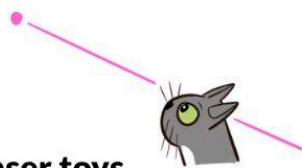
food puzzles

Introduce as a choice and never force. Many cats enjoy these. foodpuzzlesforcats.com



laser toys

...can be frustrating because cats can't catch them. Best use for short periods as a warm-up, then switch to a real toy.



NOVELTY: Rotate the toys to keep things interesting!

*For safety reasons, interactive toys with string/wire should be stored securely after play.

Play Tips

- **ALTERNATE SPEED OF MOVEMENT.** Try slow movements. Barely moving.

- **MOVE AWAY** from your cat or along a L-R plane.



- **MOVE UNDER SOMETHING.**



- Sounds of **RUSTLING** or **CRUNCHINESS** are exciting!

- **LET THEM WAIT.** Don't make it too easy or it will be boring.



- **NOT TOO CLOSE.** Cats can see the toy best when it is a few feet away.

- **Give the FULL HUNTING EXPERIENCE** - paws, mouth, and whiskers!

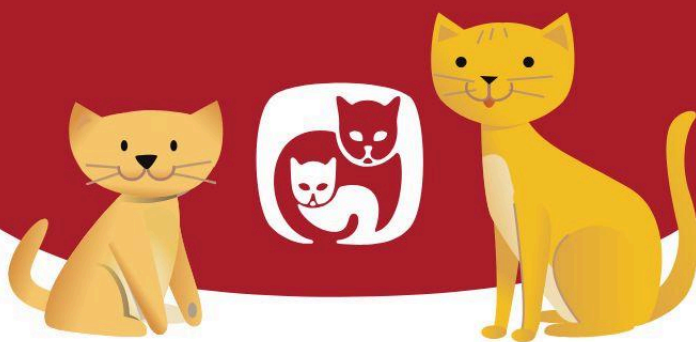


- **Most importantly, HAVE FUN** playing with your little hunter!

Have you played with your cat TODAY?



Common Cat Hazards



Signs of Poisoning

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Seizures
- Blood in the stool/urine
- Lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Bruising
- Nosebleeds
- Irregular heartbeat
- Inability to urinate
- Difficulty breathing

A fact sheet from the
Cornell Feline Health Center
CONTACT US

607-253-3414 | www.vet.cornell.edu/FHC
Find us on Facebook: Cornell Feline Health Center

What should I
do if I think my
cat has ingested
something toxic?

Call your veterinarian immediately. If your vet is not available, try a local emergency veterinary clinic or animal poison control help hotline (see below).

If you are aware of the toxin that your cat was exposed to, obtain a sample or a label to bring to the veterinarian or to provide information to a help hotline.

IMPORTANT: DO NOT induce vomiting unless you are specifically directed to do so. Certain poisons can cause more damage during vomiting

than if left in the stomach.

Resources:

Pet Poison Helpline

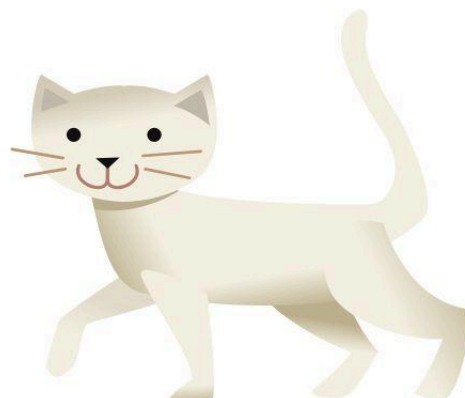
855-289-0358, petpoisonhelpline.com

ASPCA Animal Poison Control

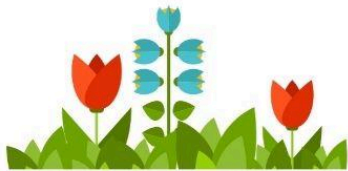
888-426-4435, aspca.org/poison

How quickly will
my cat become ill?

This depends upon the toxin involved. By the time an owner recognizes a problem, a cat may be at significant risk for serious health problems. For this reason, a prompt veterinary consultation is essential.



Common Cat Hazards



-Plants-

Indoor and outdoor plants can pose a risk to your cat. Ingesting just a small piece of some common ornamental plants such as poinsettias could be enough to make a cat ill, and swallowing a sizable amount could prove fatal. Lilies are especially toxic to cats; they can cause life-threatening kidney failure if ingested even in tiny amounts.

PLANTS THAT ARE TOXIC FOR CATS INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO):

- Poinsettias
- Lilies
- Mistletoe
- Holly
- Tulips
- Foxgloves
- Philodendrons
- Amaryllises
- Baby's Breath
- Sweet William
- Hydrangeas



-Household chemicals-

Many of the chemicals around your house can present a hazard for your feline friends. Keep these materials in a place your cats can't reach, and ensure any spills are cleaned up promptly. If you have an outdoor cat, take precautions when using these products in your yard.

PESTICIDES

- Insecticides and Rodenticides

GARDEN PRODUCTS

- Fertilizers
- Weed killers
- Molluscicides (snail baits and snail pellets)

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS

- Ethylene glycol antifreeze
- Paint thinner
- Swimming pool chemicals
- Household cleaners (including bleach, detergents, and disinfectants)



-Medications-

Human medications and flea treatments for dogs can be acutely toxic for cats. Remember: never give your cat medications without first consulting your veterinarian. Cats will often gobble up pills they find lying on tables or dropped on the floor, so be vigilant with your medications.

SOME COMMON CAUSES OF POISONING INCLUDE:

- Aspirin
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- Ibuprofen
- Dietary supplements (vitamins)
- Flea medication for dogs
Cats must not be allowed to come in contact with a treated dog for 24 hours



-Toxic Foods-

It's tempting to give your beloved cat a treat of human food, but many of the things we enjoy are off-limits for our feline friends.

THESE FOODS INCLUDE:

- Grapes
- Onions
- Raisins
- Avocados
- Anything containing xylitol, an artificial sweetener
- Chocolate

ABOUT THE CORNELL FELINE HEALTH CENTER

The Cornell Feline Health Center's mission is to improve the health and well-being of cats worldwide. Funded solely by the generous support of our donors, we provide up-to-date and expert information to cat owners and veterinarians, support basic and applied research in cat health, and promote the training of veterinary professionals and researchers.

The Cornell Feline Health Center is a unit of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, and our affiliation with this world-class institution of research and education promotes a unique

collaborative environment that fosters innovation focused on improving the lives of all cats.



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