

Hilltop Pet & Aquariums

Kitten Information Sheet

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Open Monday - Friday 9:30am-6pm Weekends & Public Holidays 10am - 5pm

Buying a kitten is an important step and you will need to observe several points for the health and happiness of your new family member.

Check List for your new kitten:

Current food and food/water bowls		Flea treatment	
Collar & ID tag		Litter and litter tray	
Vaccination card		Comb/brush	
Worming treatment		Bedding	
Play Toys		Cat pole/gym	

Feeding

We recommend Hills Science Diet for every stage of your cat's life. It will assist in keeping their body and coat in good condition. Hills Science Diet is a super premium concentrated food. It contains all the vitamins, minerals and calcium your pet needs. The cat is not required to consume as much as Science Diet does not use fillers unlike some other brands so the cost to feed your pet per day is less. You will also find less in the litter tray as most is being absorbed by the body. Science Diet is also the food recommended by most Veterinarians world wide.

Feeding meat only will supply excess protein while not supplying vitamins and minerals and most importantly calcium. Meat is not a provider of calcium.

If you do choose to change the food your cat is currently on, you should do so over a 7 to 14 day period. Any sudden changes in the diet will result in an upset stomach and can cause diarrhoea and vomiting.

Despite the popular belief, kittens should not be given milk. Milk can lead to stomach upsets and diarrhoea. Animals are lactose intolerant; therefore if you feel the need to give your kitten/cat milk (although unnecessary), only give it specified pet milk.

Fresh water should always be made available.

Vaccinations

Your kitten needs to be immunized against Feline Enteritis, Calicivirus and Rhinotracheitis. Now days, leukemia and the AIDS virus are being seen in cats so there are also vaccinations available against these.

The first vaccination takes place at 6-8* weeks of age. This vaccination is only temporary therefore the kitten must then be vaccinated at 12-14* weeks of age.

It is very important that your kitten does not come into contact (directly or indirectly) with any other cats, or be walked, until 14 days AFTER it is completely vaccinated (after the final kitten vaccination at 12-14* weeks). Kittens are very vulnerable to contracting diseases from unvaccinated and unhealthy cats.

Once kitten vaccinations are completed, boosters are required annually.

* Vaccination schedules can differ between different veterinary practices due to using different brands/types of vaccines. Please contact your veterinarian regarding their recommended schedule.

Worming

Kittens should be wormed every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age, then every 3 months for the rest of their life. When purchasing wormers make certain they cover all 8 gastrointestinal worms including tapeworms. Not all worming products available treat all worms. Worms consume nutrition from the food eaten by the kittens, leaving little nourishment for them. The kittens may not appear to be losing weight due to intestinal swelling caused by the growing worms.

Heartworm

Heartworm is spread via mosquitoes. The number of heartworm cases is now increasing in cats. Prevention is the only key. Treatment is not an option. It only takes one heartworm to kill a cat and can generally only be noticed during a post-mortem. Revolution is a spot on treatment and is the most common monthly preventative used against heartworm in cats (it also treats for fleas, ear mites, hook worms and round worms).

Fleas

Your kitten should be treated against fleas. It is easier to prevent fleas than to eradicate them once they occur and end up invading your home.

Due to their grooming habits, cats are known as the silent carriers of fleas. Cats will generally groom and ingest the fleas prior to you seeing them (unless they are infested with fleas) therefore it is ideal to regularly check for flea dirt (black flea faeces) during your grooming sessions with your cat. The 'flea dirt' is commonly found behind the ears and around the tail area.

Ingested fleas turn into the flea tapeworm. Always ensure your cat is up to date with tapeworm/all wormer protection (see section on worming).

We treat our kittens with Advantage which is a spot on flea treatment applied onto the skin that lasts 4-6 weeks per application. Advantage is the best way to ensure fleas are destroyed as it helps to control fleas in the environment (bedding, etc) and because of the time frame it has (4-6 weeks). Shampoos, sprays and powders that are also available, only last up to 5 days.

Cat (or dog) flea collars are NOT recommended due to their strong odour, and toxic nature.

Desexing

Male and female cats should be desexed at 6 months of age, especially female cats. Leaving a female cat undesexed any longer will greatly increase the chances of the cat becoming pregnant.

Undesexed cats are more likely to experience such problems as cancer (testicular and mammary), tumors and other medical disorders that can be life threatening and very costly.

Desexing your cat can also make it more controllable and will stop unwanted pregnancies, which can lead to expensive vet bills.

Toilet Training

Your kitten should have already begun training on how to use a litter tray. You should choose a spot for the litter tray and show them where it is. The tray should be cleaned out on a daily basis. We recommend using cat litter pearls, recycled paper or clumping litter as these help reduce odours. It is important not to use clumping cat litter with kittens (under 6 months of age and cats that are prone to eating it), as it can cause intestinal upsets such as vomiting.

Bedding

There are many cat poles, baskets, lounges, cushions and igloos available for your kitten to sleep in or on. Cats like a place they can call their own and feel safe and comfortable in. If possible the bed should be placed in an elevated position as most cats feel safer up off the ground, away from passing traffic.

Cat Poles

As cats like to be in higher positions, cat poles and gyms are ideal. They help to relieve tension, boredom, sharpen their claws and keep them off your furniture and curtains. We carry over 25 different poles/gyms and are all of excellent quality.

Identification

Your cat must wear a collar with an ID tag on it at all times. The ID tag should have at least the cats' name and your contact numbers (your name and address are not recommended). We have a computerized tag engraving machine available at our shop that will engrave a tag for you in moments.

Micro-chipping is an excellent idea as it is a permanent way of identifying your cat and cannot be lost like collars. A rice-sized chip is implanted underneath the skin and an 'M' tattoo is placed in the right ear to identify that the cat is micro chipped. Microchipping can be done at any time by the vet using local anaesthetic but the tattoo can not be applied until the cat is under a full anaesthetic (e.g. at time of desexing).

Veterinary Care

You must be prepared to take any sick or injured animal to a vet without delay to minimize any pain or further complications to the health of your pet.

Something that may begin as a minor problem can easily end up developing into something major, and possibly life threatening, so it is advisable to contact your vet without delay.

This brochure was put together by the staff of Hilltop Pet & Aquariums as a general guide to assist you in raising your pet and advising requirements to keep your friend happy and healthy.

If you cannot provide the proper care and housing, we strongly suggest you not purchase the animal.

We have books available for sale should you require more information.