

WHAT DO I NEED?

For a kitty you need the basics, but also some fun things that you may wish to add at a later date. Here is a list of necessary and suggested items to help your new friend feel right at home!

1. Dishes
2. Litter Box
3. Dry Food
4. Wet Food
5. Cat Bed
6. Toys!!
7. Cat Activity Tree
8. Carrier
9. Scratching boards or posts

HOW DO I PREPARE?

MAKE SURE EVERYONE IN THE HOUSE IS PREPARED TO HAVE A CAT

Talk to your family members before bringing a new cat home. Make sure everyone knows that the fun begins only after kitty feels safe and its needs are met. Once you're sure everyone is ready for feeding, litter changing and grooming, you can divvy up chores among family members so everyone is prepared to care for kitty before she arrives.

Your current pets should be prepared too! Make sure all animals in the home are current on vaccines, wellness checks, etc.

A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

Choose a low-traffic room your kids and other pets don't frequent—this will be your cat's safe space to sniff, eat, scratch, and play while she gets her bearings. Arrange her food and water bowls, bed, and litter box—and scatter her toys around. You can even clean off a windowsill for her and have soft music playing. She'll appreciate the chance to feel out her new family from inside her haven.

ROUTINE BEHAVIOR

Give your cat a little structure to lean on. For the first few weeks, provide him with the same kind of food and feeding schedule he had before living with you—and give him the same brand of litter, too, for a familiar scent and feel on his paws. Later on, if you wish to switch to different products, you can make a slow transition. We will give you a small bag of food and litter to start you off.

WHAT'S NEW, PUSSYCAT?

With a whole new life in store for her, Kitty will need some time and space to check out her surroundings and all of her new play things. Give her time alone in her room to get comfortable before you come in to play with her. If you have other pets, it's a good idea to leave your new cat in her own room for a few days, to allow the other animals in the house to get used to her sounds and scent. (Hint: Watch from the door to see how she leaves her carrier. Whether she pussyfoots into a dark corner or zooms out into the room, you'll know how she feels about her new surroundings.)

INTRODUCING KITTY TO THE PACK

Go slow at first. A cat may need seven to fourteen days to relax into her new environment. If you have kids, let them introduce themselves one at a time. Hold up on the meet-and-greets with friends, neighbors and relatives until your kitty is eating and eliminating on a normal schedule. If you have other pets, don't let your new addition have free run of the house. This is the territory of the animals who have lived with you already. Allow all of your pets to meet in the new cat's territory—and make sure you're there to supervise.

CAT-PROOF YOUR HOME

When your cat is ready to explore the rest of her new home (for short excursions at first), be sure to get rid of stray items she might chew on or swallow, like toilet

paper, tissues and paper towels. Pens and pencils may need to be kept in drawers. You may also have to tape wires to baseboards and put caps on outlets.

Put away harsh cleaning products, human medications and household poisons, and rehome any house plants that might be toxic to her. Make sure foods that aren't healthy for a cat's tummy are placed securely out of reach.

PLAN FOR A VET VISIT - BE PREPARED

Last but not least, be prepared to bring your new feline for a wellness exam within 30 days after adoption, or sooner if booster vaccines are needed. Make this appointment even before you bring your kitty home. If you do not currently have a vet, sign up with a one in advance since not all vet offices accept new clients.