

Cool
cats

Junior
Cat Care



Looking
after your cat

Think first for your cat!

Before you get your cat, be sure you can give him the home he needs and deserves. Here's a checklist of important questions you need to answer.

can you?	✓	✗
🐾 Afford the cat's weekly food bill? (roughly £3.50)		
🐾 Can you be at home at least part of the day every day?		
🐾 Can you afford to neuter your cat?		
🐾 Can you afford your cat's vaccinations and booster shots every year?		
🐾 Can you afford to board your cat when away on holidays?		
🐾 Can you afford vet bills if your cat becomes ill? (Taking out pet insurance can save you lots of money in this instance)		
🐾 Can you give your time and affection for the rest of his life?		

Being the owner of a cat means responsibility, whether you help at home in taking care of the cat or whether you are the sole owner. Although cats are independent, they rely on their owners as much as any other animal does. So the questions you have just read are important. If you can honestly answer yes to all of the above questions, contact your nearest Cats Protection Shelter or Branch. Our Helpline can help find one near you: 08702 099 099.

Choosing your cat

Choosing your cat is relatively simple — whether you pick a long-haired, short-haired, male or female cat. If you choose a long-haired cat, you must be prepared for daily grooming to avoid a matted coat. Choosing a male or female is a personal choice, as both sexes are similar in temperament. Vets recommend that all sexes be neutered by the age of six months.



Where you live

By a busy road?

If you live on a busy main road, think carefully before getting a cat as a pet, as they are frequently killed by cars.

In an apartment?

While some cats live quite happily in apartments and prefer to stay indoors, others like to roam about outside.



If your cat cannot gain access to the outside world you will have to be prepared to cater for all his needs. He will need more attention in a number of ways. For example, you will have to spend more time with your cat, or he will get too lonely. And, you will have to buy essentials such as indoor toilet



facilities/litter tray, a scratching post, potted grass and toys. If you can't provide these things for your cat and you live in an apartment, then he will not be a happy cat. So, think ahead.

What your new cat needs.

Bedtime

A cat needs a dry, warm comfortable bed. You can make a simple bed from a cardboard box lined with a newspaper and a blanket; however, most people prefer to purchase a ready-made cat bed, which can be quite cheap. You can buy cat beds in any pet shop. But, remember: cats are independent creatures and quite often find their own favourite sleeping spots...your couch or own bed might be such a spot.



Litter Tray

A litter tray should be placed in a quiet spot away from human traffic. It should also be kept away from stored food.

Food dishes

Always use a separate bowl for food and water. Cats prefer eating from ceramic, as food odours can permeate plastic, making fresh food smell unpalatable to their keen noses. Clean the bowls after every feed and change the water daily.

Food

A balanced diet is essential for your cat to remain healthy. Choose only good quality tinned or dried food for cats. Always have a supply of fresh water available for your cat. Cats are carnivores, and cannot survive on a vegetarian diet.



Introducing your cat into his new home

When introducing your new cat to your home, provide him with a safe haven where he won't be disturbed — for instance, a spare room. Put the cat's food, water, litter tray and bedding in the room. Your cat may well spend his first day hiding under the bed. If so, don't worry; he will come out when he feels more confident. Let your cat decide when he wants to come to you to be handled. This may well be when you are sitting down or lying in bed.

Contact your local vet for advice on microchipping. And, remember — take a photograph of your cat; it can help with identification should he go missing.

Toilet training

Your cat may already be litter-trained when you get him, but, if not, training does not usually cause many problems. Simply place the litter tray somewhere out of the way of human feet and easily accessible for the cat. Show the cat where the litter is by placing him in it. Watch him closely after eating or waking

CAT FACT

Cats live for around 14-16 years, although it is not unusual for a cat to live for more than 20 years.

First few nights

Although a cat does not take long to adjust to new surroundings, it often helps to put a hot water bottle under his blanket for the first few nights. He should be kept indoors for fear of getting lost or injured or being exposed to diseases carried by outdoor cats. It is crucial to keep him indoors for at least three to four weeks to give him time to readjust to his new territory. We recommend you microchip your cat. This will help should he stray or get lost.

up. If he makes a mistake, carry him to the litter tray and don't punish him. While you are toilet training your cat it may be better to confine him to just one room until you are confident he is trained.

Feeding

The amount of food you should feed your cat depends on the cat itself, as each cat eats different amounts of food. As a rough guide, an adult cat will eat about one tin of cat food served at room temperature spread over two meals a day (400/450g). A cat has specific nutritional needs, so his diet must be balanced. If you let them, they can become fussy eaters, demanding only their favourite tidbits like fish or chicken. To help avoid a fussy cat, try to vary his food. Never allow your cat to eat



dog food! When buying dried food for your cat, make sure it is a complete diet and of good quality. If in doubt, seek advice from your vet.

Milk

Most people associate cats with milk. But, the truth is that the digestive system of most cats — particularly kittens — is upset by cow's milk. Vets recommend that you not feed cow's milk to your cat because it can cause diarrhoea. If your cat is particularly fond of milk, a small amount, watered down, will probably do no harm. You can also try giving your cat goat's milk or specially-formulated "milk" for cats available at supermarkets, which is better for them. Keep in mind that milk

for cats is a food, not a drink, and is not a substitute for water.

Vaccination

Unless your cat is vaccinated, he runs the risk of contracting one of the several serious possible fatal diseases which include:

Infectious Enteritis (Panleucopenia)
Cat 'Flu (Infectious Respiratory)
Leukaemia (FeLV).

A course of two vaccinations is given to a kitten at about nine weeks and an annual booster is recommended to maintain protection. Keep your vaccination records up to date, as they will be needed when boarding your cat.



Neutering

Q Why neuter?

A There are too many unwanted cats already, without adding to the problem. Neutered cats are happier, healthier, making better pets. They also roam less.

Q Should I allow my cat to have one litter before being spayed?

A There is no reason to do so.

Q Isn't it cruel to interfere with my pet's natural urges?

A No, it is even more cruel to allow your pet to produce unwanted kittens that cannot be homed.

Q But what if I can find homes for the kittens?

A There are already not enough good homes for animals, and too many kittens are needlessly put down each year or abandoned to run wild. Cats Protection's Branches and Shelters are full of beautiful cats needing homes.

Q Will neutering change my cat's personality?

A Females will have little or no change, males will become less aggressive and less likely to wander.

Q Does neutering make cats fat?

A An animal only gets fat from overeating.



It costs a lot of money to care for and feed a pregnant cat and a litter of kittens. However, many veterinary practices cooperate with local animal welfare societies and offer reduced fees for lower income pet owners. Cats Protection runs a neutering scheme for cats with owners on low incomes. Phone our Helpline to find out more.

Did you know?

- A female cat can, in just five years, be responsible for 20,000 descendants.
- From the age of six months, a female cat can have up to three litters each year with five or six kittens in each litter.
- A neutered cat is less likely to catch FIV or FeLV.
- A neutered cat is more likely to stay close to home and therefore be a safer and better pet.
- Most cats killed on the roads are un-castrated toms.
- Neutered cats are less likely to wander, protect their territory or get into fights with other cats.
- Cats—male and female—should be neutered from five months of age.



Routine Care for Cats

Grooming

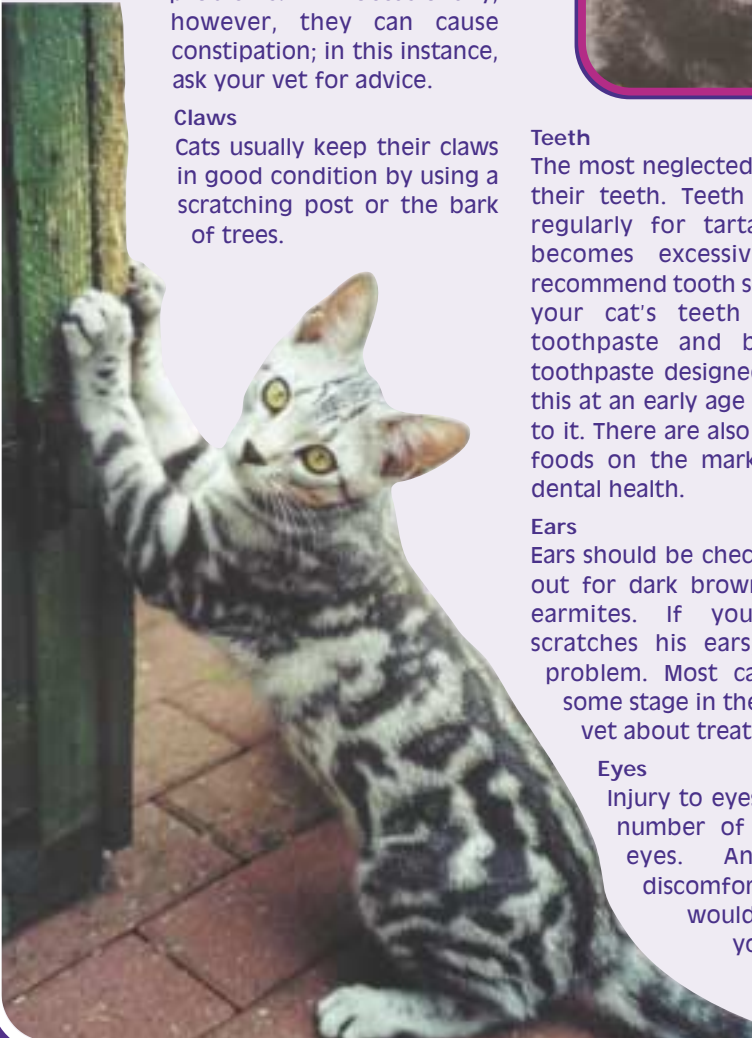
Long-haired cats will need daily grooming. Use a coarse metal comb and a soft brush. Short-haired cats are less demanding; they usually keep their coats in good condition by licking themselves.

Fur Balls

During the moulting season, cats can accumulate hair in their stomachs from licking. Usually these hairs cause no problems. Occasionally, however, they can cause constipation; in this instance, ask your vet for advice.

Claws

Cats usually keep their claws in good condition by using a scratching post or the bark of trees.



Teeth

The most neglected area of cat health is their teeth. Teeth should be checked regularly for tartar build-up. If this becomes excessive, your vet may recommend tooth scaling. You can brush your cat's teeth using a specialist toothpaste and brush. Do not use toothpaste designed for humans. Begin this at an early age to get your cat used to it. There are also specially-formulated foods on the market to ensure feline dental health.

Ears

Ears should be checked regularly. Watch out for dark brown wax — it may be earmites. If your cat continually scratches his ears, this may be the problem. Most cats get earmites at some stage in their lives. Consult your vet about treatment.

Eyes

Injury to eyes are common and a number of diseases affect the eyes. Any discharge or discomfort involving the eyes would necessitate a visit to your vet.

Holidays

Unless your cat is used to travelling, it is not a good idea to bring him on holidays and run the risk of losing him. Cats are also territorial, and are happiest in familiar surroundings. It is best to make arrangements with someone you can trust to take care of him in his own home. If that's not possible, make arrangements with a cattery in good time to avoid disappointment. Finding a satisfactory cattery may not be easy. Your vet may be able to recommend a place to you. Always visit the cattery first to see the conditions and, if possible, speak to other cat owners who have used the facility before. Ensure that your cat's vaccinations are up-to-date, as the cattery will want to see the records before accepting him.

Parasites

Worms

The two types of worm your cat will need treatment for are tapeworm and roundworm.

Roundworm

Most kittens are born with roundworm. They are pinkie-white, thin, coiled, string-like and can be passed whole in the animal's faeces or vomit.

Tapeworm

Tapeworms are long thin stripes made up of flat segments which can come out one at a time and are found in the hair around the anus; they look like rice grains. Adult cats should be wormed every three months, whether they have worms or not. Kittens should be treated against worms as early as two weeks. Your vet will advise you and supply you with worm treatment.

Fleas

Fleas can be a problem in the best-kept home or with the cleanest pet. Regular spraying or dusting with a product recommended to you by your vet will destroy any fleas living on your pet. Regular spraying of bedding and furniture combined with thorough vacuuming of furniture and floors (particularly around skirting boards) will destroy each stage of the flea's new lifecycle.



What if your cat goes missing?

Many cats come in to Cats Protection as strays, having wandered away from home. Often, there is no way to identify the cats or trace their owners. Microchipping is the best way to help ensure your pet will be returned to you in such instances.

Microchipping is a safe and permanent means of identifying your cat. Each chip has an identification number on it which gets stored in a database, along with the details of the cat and your name and address.

The chip is implanted under the skin between the shoulder blades in a simple procedure. Once implanted, your cat will be unaware of its presence.

Most animal welfare agencies, including most veterinary surgeries, have microchip scanners. Unidentified cats can be quickly scanned to find the chip. If a chip is present, the number appears, linking your pet to the central database. Your missing cat could be home with you in a matter of hours.

Cats Protection strongly recommends you have your cat microchipped as a precaution against possible heartbreak. Ask your vet about having this done.

Finding a vet for your cat

Introduce yourself and your cat to your local vet within the first few days of getting him. Have the vet examine the cat and give him his first booster shot or course of vaccinations. If you are happy with the medical attention your pet gets and it's at a price you can afford, then you've found your vet. You should then make an appointment to have your cat neutered, if it isn't already.

Every Cats Protection cat ready for a new home has already been neutered, and, depending on the Shelter or Branch, vaccinated and/or microchipped. All Shelter cats, and some Branch cats, come with six weeks' free insurance.

Record of Cat Vaccination

Owner's name: Cat's name:

Address:

Breed: Age: Sex:

Has been vaccinated against the diseases indicated below:

Feline Respiratory Disease or Cat 'Flu'

Feline Panleucopenia

Feline Leukaemia

Primary Vaccination Record:

Vaccine/batch no. Signature Date Date booster due

 / / / /

Booster Vaccination record:

Date booster due Vaccine/batch no. Signature Date

/ / / /

And, Finally...

If your cat does not suit your lifestyle or there are problems, contact your local vet or Cats Protection's Helpline for advice. If your cat has a behavioural problem, your vet can advise you on who to contact for help.

If you decide to rehome your cat, do not be tempted to stray it. Most domesticated cats cannot live by hunting alone.

Cats Protection keeps every cat in our care until we find it a new home. We will never euthanase a cat, except on the advice of a vet.

Cats As Unique Animals

Test your knowledge

Cats' eyes

1. Cats have a third eyelid, which you may only see when it is unwell. What is this third eyelid called?
2. All cats are born with the same colour eyes, which then change over time. What is the original colour?

Cats' mouths/whiskers

3. How many teeth does an adult cat have?
4. Who has the better sense of taste, cats or dogs?
5. How many whiskers does an adult cat have?
6. What do cats use their whiskers for?

1. Haw 2. Blue 3. About 30 4. Cats 5. About 12 each side 6. To determine space, width, how close something is, how narrow a passage is, etc.

Answers

Come Join Us!

If you're young and cat crazy, why not join Cats Protection! For just £5 a year you can become a member of our Cool Cats Club (recommended age 16 and under). You'll receive our fun and colourful magazine *Cool Cats* packed with cat stories, competitions, photos, penpals, celebrity interviews and lots more.

For further information, contact Supporter Services on 0800 917 2287 or fill in the form below. Group membership is also available.

Payer's details:

Membership/Supporter
number (if known) _____

Title _____ Initial _____ Last name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone number _____ Date of birth _____

E-mail address _____

- I would like to join **Cool Cats**
- I am paying for the person named below to join **Cool Cats**
- I would like to give a gift membership of **Cool Cats** to the person named below

Please make all cheques for membership subscriptions payable to **Cats Protection**. Post your application form and cheque or postal order (signed and dated) to: **Cats Protection, Freepost SEA 4333, Horsham RH13 5ZU.** Allow 28 days for delivery.

Details of Cool Cats member (if the same as above, leave blank)

First name _____ Last name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

E-mail address _____

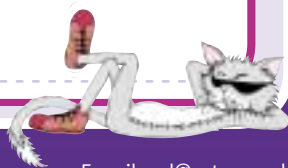
Telephone number _____

Date of birth _____

Boy

Girl

If this is a gift membership the message in the Gift Card should read,
'With all best wishes from'



Cats Protection is the UK's leading
feline welfare charity.

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