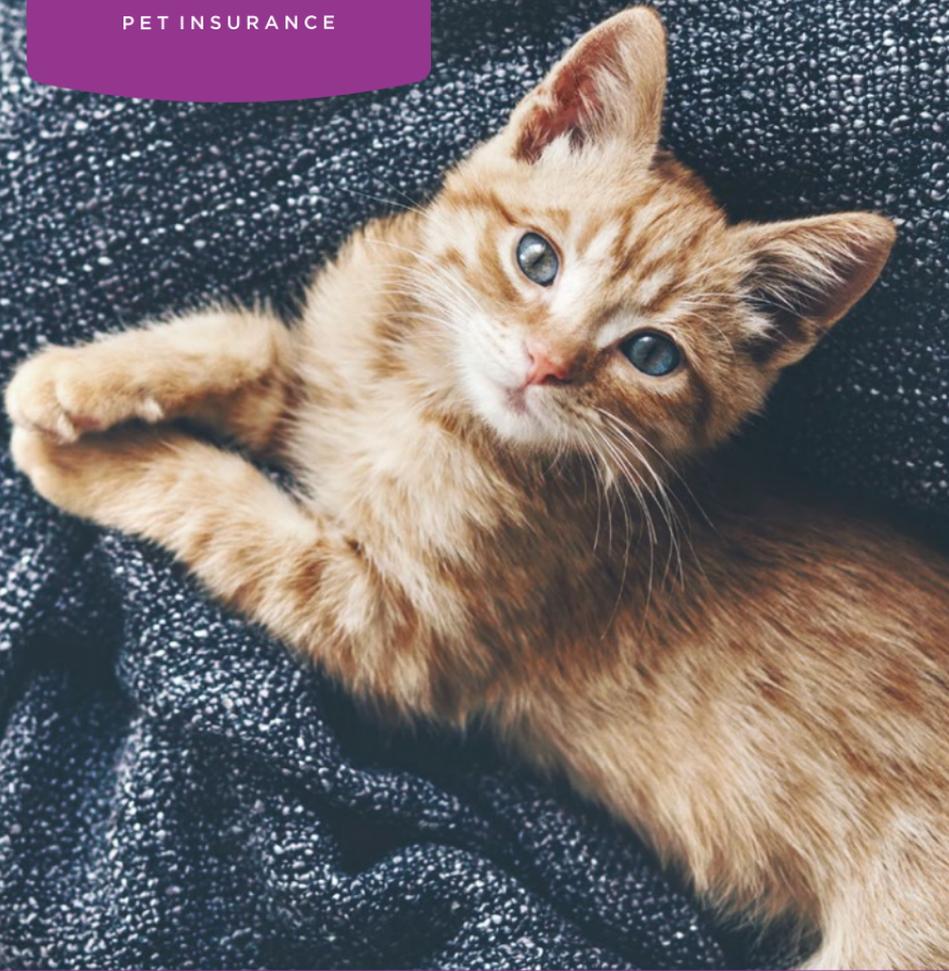


**EMBRACE**<sup>®</sup>

PET INSURANCE



# KITTEN 101

AN OWNER'S MANUAL

# Basic Care

## NEW KITTEN SHOPPING LIST

A new kitten requires a few must-have supplies – and some that are just for fun. Be sure to stock up.

### Collar

Even indoor cats should wear a collar in case they slip out the door or a window without you noticing. Pick a collar that is appropriate for your kitten's size and make sure to adjust the fit. A collar that is too tight can be uncomfortable for your kitten but one that is too loose could slip off.

### Tags/Microchipping

Identification tags are an essential accessory for any kitten's collar – especially if your kitten is prone to door dashing or will be an indoor/outdoor cat. If your kitten runs away, the information on those tags can be the one thing that brings him home. Microchipping is another valuable and inexpensive tool to increase your kitten's chance of making it home should he get lost.

### Food & Water Bowls

Food and water bowls come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and materials. Consider purchasing stainless steel bowls since they are pet safe and less likely to hold bacteria.

### Litter Box, Litter, & Scoop

Your kitten's litter box should have a short side for easy access and may have a top to contain odor. It should be large enough for the kitten to stand up and turn around. If you have multiple cats, you will need multiple litter boxes. Shop around to find the right litter for you and your kitten.

### Toys

Kittens love anything they can play with. If it rolls, squeaks, or bounces, a kitten will want it! Cat toys are not only fun for kittens, they help your kitten's development. Kittens need durable toys that can stand up to rough play and chewing.



Your new kitten will quickly become a cherished member of your family. Here are some tips for providing your kitten with everything he needs.

## KITTEN PROOFING YOUR HOME

Before bringing your new kitten home, take a look around your house. You might even consider getting down on your hands and knees to look at things from a kitten's perspective. What dangers do you see?

To a new kitten, everything is a potential toy or snack. Put away anything that you don't want your kitten to chew or swallow – especially electrical cords, rubber bands, thread/string/ribbon, toys with small parts, and drapery cords. Make sure any poisonous household products and plants are stored away and keep lids on garbage cans.

Lastly, choose an easily accessible location for the kitten's litter box, food, water, and bed. To avoid accidents, make sure the litter box is in a location that will always be available to your kitten.

## FEEDING YOUR KITTEN

You've probably heard the phrase "you are what you eat." This applies to your kitten too. To help him grow into a healthy cat, you'll need to feed him right. Select a cat food that is formulated for kittens.

### Wet vs Dry Food

Wet and dry foods both have benefits for your kitten. Wet food contains more water and often has more fat and protein than dry foods. But it needs to be refrigerated and spoils more easily. Dry food is generally less expensive, better for a cat's teeth, and can be left out without spoiling. Both have benefits and drawbacks, but ultimately, the choice is yours.

### How To Feed Your Kitten

Once you've selected your kitten's food, look at the serving guidelines on the bag or can based on your kitten's weight and activity level. Often the amounts listed in these guidelines are more than your kitten really needs and can lead to obesity. Consider feeding your kitten about 75% of that amount.

Kittens need double the nutritional intake of adult cats and often do well with free feeding so they can eat when they are hungry. However, some indoor cats may overeat and could start gaining excess weight. In that case, feed a measured amount twice a day. Worried about your cat's weight? Consult your veterinarian.

## SOCIALIZATION

Socialization is a key part of your kitten's development into a stable well-adjusted cat. A poorly socialized cat will likely have issues with fear and aggression and is more likely to fight with other cats and lash out at humans.

### Here are a few tips for socializing your kitten:

- Start early!
- Handle your kitten often so he gets used to being picked up and touched
- Invite friends to meet your kitten
- Introduce your kitten to new sights and sounds

### Introducing Your Kitten To...



#### Dogs

Start by allowing the dog and kitten to see each other so you can gauge reactivity. When introducing your kitten to a dog, let them sniff each other, interact, and, if all goes well, play. Be sure to provide him with a safe place to escape if he feels threatened where the dog cannot reach him. Let your cat and dog establish their own territories and power structure within reasonable limits.

#### Cats

Cats are territorial animals so make sure that each cat has his own space. Introduce the cats to each other's smell using towels or blankets before they meet face to face. When the cats do finally meet, do not rush things and monitor interactions for the first few weeks.



#### Kids

Children often don't understand that kittens need to be handled with care. For this reason, all interactions that children have with a new kitten should be closely supervised. When bringing your new kitten home, have children sit on the floor and let the kitten come to them.



## GROOMING

Cats are very good at self-grooming but will sometimes need your help. Here are some tips to keep your kitten looking his best.

### Brushing & Shedding

Most cats shed; it can't be avoided. As old hair dies and new hair grows in its place, cats shed the dead hair (and skin) much like humans. To keep your kitten's coat healthy, cut down on the occurrence of hairballs, and avoid excess fur in your home, brush your kitten regularly. Keep sessions short and positive – the sooner you start brushing your kitten, the easier it will be.

### Bathing

Most cats do not like being bathed, but sometimes it's unavoidable.

#### Bathing Tips:

- Fill a sink with a small amount of warm water
- Use gentle feline shampoo. Human products are too harsh
- Speak to your kitten in a soothing tone
- Massage the shampoo into your kitten's coat gently
- Rinse thoroughly and towel dry

### Nail Trimming

Nail trimming is important and should start early so your kitten can get used to it at a young age. Long nails can be a danger to your kitten because they often catch on things and rip. You can use small cat nail trimmers at home making sure to cut just the tip to avoid the pink quick. Also consider scratching pads and posts to keep your kitten's nails short. Need advice? Talk to your veterinarian for tips and strategies.



# Pet Insurance

Kittens are sweet, cuddly, adorable, and unpredictable. No matter how much you plan, they will find a way to surprise you. Pet insurance can help you manage the unexpected.

Pet insurance isn't a way to save money on veterinary bills, it's actual insurance just like for your car or home. There are lots of pet insurance plans available, but they aren't all the same. Each company differs in what they cover, what they exclude, what they cost, their level of customer service, and how they pay claims.

Embrace Pet Insurance offers comprehensive, personalized coverage, exceptional customer service, and the peace of mind that comes from knowing your pet is protected for life.

## What It Covers

Embrace policies cover all the basics that you would expect: accidents, illnesses, diagnostic tests, surgery, and more. But Embrace also covers some things that some other pet insurance companies don't, including breed-specific conditions, ER & specialist care, exam fees, alternative therapies, cancer treatment, and chronic conditions.

## What It Doesn't Cover

The most important thing to note with any pet insurance company is that pre-existing conditions are not covered. A pre-existing condition is something that your pet had, was diagnosed with, or showed symptoms of before enrolling in pet insurance or during a waiting period. To avoid pre-existing conditions, you should insure your kitten early before he or she develops any major conditions or illnesses.

Other exclusions include cosmetic procedures, pregnancy, breeding, and DNA testing. A full list of exclusions can be found at [EmbracePetInsurance.com/coverage](https://www.EmbracePetInsurance.com/coverage).



## What It Costs

Pet insurance prices vary widely, but on average you can expect to pay around \$12-\$18 per month. However, you shouldn't compare pet insurance plans based on price alone. In general, policies that cost more will cover and reimburse more when you submit a claim.

## Wellness Rewards\*

Beyond standard coverage for accidents and illnesses, Embrace Pet Insurance also offers a wellness plan for routine wellness items that can be purchased in addition to your insurance policy. Routine care adds up quickly for a kitten.

Embrace's optional routine care plan, Wellness Rewards works like a health savings account that you can use toward routine care like wellness exams, vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, grooming, flea, tick, and heartworm medications, and much more. You pay in each month and Embrace adds a little extra to help you budget for these expenses. Plus, the full allowance becomes available to you the day you sign up.

There are a lot of pet insurance companies out there, and each one is different. Do your research and make the choice that is right for you. Don't know where to start? [Petinsurancereview.com](http://Petinsurancereview.com) is a completely independent source that features customer reviews.

\* Wellness Rewards is not available in RI.

Visit **EmbraceYourKitten.com**  
to get your free quote today.



# Health & Veterinary Care

## IMMUNIZATIONS/VACCINATIONS

### Core vs Noncore

According to the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP), core vaccines are generally recommended for all cats to protect against diseases that are more serious or potentially fatal. These diseases are found in all areas of North America and are more easily transmitted than noncore diseases. The AAHA guidelines define the following as core vaccines: panleukopenia virus (FPV), feline herpesvirus-1, feline calicivirus (FHV-1/FCV), and rabies.

Noncore vaccines are those reserved for patients at specific risk for infection due to exposure or lifestyle. The AAHA/AAFP guidelines classify feline leukemia virus (FeLV), feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), kennel cough, and *Chlamydomphila felis* vaccines within the noncore group.

### FVRCP

FVR = Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis or Herpes Virus 1, C = Calicivirus, P = Parvovirus or Panleukopenia

This vaccination should be given to your kitten between six to eight weeks of age and then every three to four weeks until they reach sixteen weeks old. A booster vaccine is given at one year of age and then every one to three years thereafter.

### Rabies

The rabies vaccine is given after your kitten is 12 weeks old and again at 1 year. It is typically given every three years after that. Rabies is a severe disease that affects your pet's neurologic system and can cause aggression, stumbling, seizure, and acting like he is in a stupor. The vaccine is required in many municipalities.



Aside from the basic care that you can provide, your new kitten will also require regular visits to your veterinarian.

## FLEAS, TICKS & WORMS – OH MY!

### Fleas

Fleas are tiny insects that grow by feeding on the blood of other animals. Fleas reproduce quickly and can infest your home in just a short time. It can be a frustrating cycle that can cause medical problems for animals and humans if left untreated.

When selecting a flea treatment, look for one that kills both adult fleas and larvae while preventing reproduction.

### Ticks

Similar to fleas, ticks latch on to your pet and feed off his blood. The worry with a tick lies in the diseases it can carry as they pose a danger to pets and humans alike. Many flea preventatives include tick management. Talk to your veterinarian to learn more.

You should also inspect your cat for ticks regularly. If you spot one, grasp it close to the cat's skin, twist and pull straight up to unlock the mouth and remove the tick. Once removed, flush, burn or otherwise destroy the tick. Contact your veterinarian with questions.

### Heartworm

Heartworm is spread by the bite of a mosquito infected with the heartworm larvae. The disease compromises a cat's heart and lungs, often leading to death. There is no approved heartworm treatment for cats. Even indoor cats are at risk because mosquitoes can get through screens.

**The cost of heartworm prevention is minimal.** Kittens should start on a heartworm preventative at eight weeks of age and be tested for heartworm at seven months, then yearly thereafter. Discuss the best preventative options for your kitten with your veterinarian.

### Intestinal Parasites

Heartworm isn't the only "worm" you have to worry about. Intestinal parasites, including hookworms, whipworms, and roundworms, can lead to poor health. These parasites are passed through stool in litter boxes or tracked in on shoes or paws and can be dangerous to humans and other pets. Regular stool tests are recommended for both indoor and outdoor cats.

## SPAYING OR NEUTERING YOUR KITTEN

Unless you plan to breed or show your kitten, spaying or neutering can provide valuable health and behavioral benefits – and it guarantees that your kitten won't contribute to pet overpopulation.

**Spaying** a female before her first heat cycle significantly reduces the risk of breast cancer, uterine infections, and other types of cancer.

**Neutering** a male helps prevent fighting, spraying, and aggression and completely eliminates the chance of testicular cancer.

Talk to your veterinarian about the best time to spay or neuter your kitten.

## DENTAL CARE

Dental care should start as soon as you get your kitten. Consider investing in treats and toys that promote good dental health. Chewing is a natural instinct for your kitten and helps scrape away tartar, plaque, and built-up food.

Start brushing your kitten's teeth early. Brush regularly, at least once a week, so it becomes part of your pet's routine. Make sure your kitten gets regular check-ups so a veterinarian can monitor his teeth.

## FIRST AID & CPR

Knowing what to do in an emergency can save your kitten's life. Be careful to avoid being hurt, bitten, or scratched by your kitten; even the most docile and loving pet can get stressed when sick or injured.

Finding your kitten isn't breathing or has no heart beat can be a terrifying experience. It is important to stay calm and perform CPR. Talk to your veterinarian to learn the best CPR practices for your kitten.

## POISONOUS SUBSTANCES

There are many substances that are poisonous to cats. These should be locked away or stored out of your kitten's reach. Symptoms of ingestion of a poisonous substance include vomiting, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, abnormal urine, salivation, and weakness. If you think your pet might have ingested something toxic, call your veterinarian or poison control immediately.



## LITTER BOX TRAINING

Litter box training your new kitten requires patience, dedication, and accepting that there may be accidents.

Place the litter box in an accessible, quiet area so your kitten will have privacy. Closely supervise your kitten so you can get him to the litter box at the appropriate time. Take him to the litter box immediately after sleeping and play sessions to avoid accidents. When he goes in the box, praise him with attention and/or a small treat.

Your kitten will stop going in the litter box if it is not cleaned often. Remove solid waste daily and change the litter weekly or sooner if needed.

**Training Tips:** Is your kitten not using the box? Try these suggestions. Consult your veterinarian if the problem persists.

- Move the box away from food/water, activity or other cats' boxes
- Try a different type of litter
- Clean the box more regularly and/or remove the top

## INDOOR VS OUTDOOR CATS

While many cats enjoy being outdoors where they can act on their natural instincts, it is not true that cats need to be allowed outdoors to be happy.

Allowing a cat to live outdoors full-time, or even part-time, opens him up to fighting, getting lost, being hit by a car, and the possibility of infectious disease.

Do not allow a kitten who has been declawed go outdoors as he won't be able to defend himself if the need arises. Also make sure that any cat that is allowed outside has proper identification with a collar ID and microchip.

## EXERCISE AND MENTAL STIMULATION

Playing with your kitten serves many purposes – it's a bonding activity, a form of exercise, and a way to keep your kitten mentally stimulated.

Cats have a natural predatory instinct, so small toys that look like mice or birds that allow him to explore his desire to hunt are especially appealing. Some other great toys to satisfy these natural urges include a feather on a string and laser pointers.

New toys are always more exciting than old ones. Hide toys around the house or rotate your supply so your cat is always able to find a new, challenging experience.



# Protect your new best friend with Embrace Pet Insurance.

Your kitten is the newest member of your family and needs all the support he can get. Let Embrace give you the peace of mind you deserve to provide the best care for your furry family. With Embrace you get:

- Up to 90% back on vet bills using any vet
- Personalized insurance plans to fit your family
- An unbeatable flexible wellness program\*
- Claims payments you can take to the bank

**E**

**Get Your Free Quote in Minutes**

[EmbraceYourKitten.com](https://EmbraceYourKitten.com)



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