

CAT & KITTEN ADOPTION INFO

Congrats on adding a new cat or kitten to your home, and thank you for adopting from CCAC!

3/3/3 RULE



3 DAYS TO DECOMPRESS

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Scared or unsure of what's going on
- Not yet comfortable to be "himself"
- May not want to eat or drink
- Shuts down and/or hides under furniture
- Tests the boundaries



3 WEEKS TO LEARN YOUR ROUTINE

- Starts settling in
- Feeds more comfortable
- Realizes this could be forever home
- Figures out the environment, gets into a routine
- Lets their guard down; begins to show true personality
- Behavior issues may appear



3 MONTHS TO FEEL AT HOME

- Finally feels completely comfortable in their home
- Begins to build trust and a true bond
- Gains a sense of security with their new family
- Settles into a routine

PATIENCE, PATIENCE, AND MORE PATIENCE!

Give your new cat plenty of time to slowly get to know their new home and adjust to their new environment. As tempting as it might be to show off your new cat, limit visitors and interactions with other pets. Your cat will need time to decompress, transition from shelter to home life, and begin to show their true personality.

Keep your cat in the carrier until they're safely inside the new home with all doors and windows closed. Be mindful of exits to the outdoors for the first few weeks because if they get out, they won't know where they live yet.

Indoor only - Do not allow your cat outdoors and do not declaw.

Prepare a small quiet area with food, water, uncovered litter box, scratching post, toys, and bed.

A spare bathroom is often a perfect place that is easy to clean. Keep in this confined space for several days to weeks to allow them to slowly adapt. Some may take longer than others to become comfortable in their room and allowed access to the whole house. Don't panic if your new cat hides for the first several days (or even longer) in their new home. Give them time to settle in - patience is key.

Provide multiple hiding places.

Big paper bags or a cardboard box with a blanket and holes cut in both sides work great. Offer hiding places on the ground as well as up high. Use calm body language: sit facing the side, speak softly, and extend a hand to let the cat sniff you, and allow them to approach you. You can also toss a few treats gently nearby.

Avoid bites and scratches.

(1) Let the cat come to you. **(2)** Offer an extended finger or the back of your hand to the cat. If they move towards, rub, or smell your hand, try one stroke. Often the cat will direct you to where they want to be petted (such as the chin). **(3)** Pause – take a break and watch the cat's body language. If they move to you or rub into you, pet for a few seconds and repeat the process. If they are neutral or move away, stop petting. Allow them to choose to engage or end the interaction. Give treats to create positive associations.



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Respect body language.

A swishing tail, ears back, or gentle nips are all signs of a cat becoming irritated or over-stimulated and if ignored, can lead to being scratched or bitten. Give them space, stop petting, etc. Do not punish.

Introduce other pets slowly.

Use doors, baby gates, and leashes to help pets adjust and maintain a safe distance until you can completely trust them together. Keep food, toys, and treats separate while pets get to know each other.

Scratching is normal.

Scratching helps to condition the claws, mark territory, relieve stress, and stretch muscles. Provide your cat with scratching options such as a rope scratching post, a log with bark intact, a cardboard scratching pad, etc. A good scratching post will be, tall/long enough to enable a full stretch, and stable (to not topple over). Place near a favorite sleeping place as cats love to stretch and scratch after a nap. Reinforce use with praise and treats. Catnip can be used to attract a cat to an appropriate scratching item.

Scoop the litter box

1-2x daily. Empty completely every 2 weeks. Use mild soap. Avoid strong-smelling detergents or ammonia.

A fulfilled cat is a good cat!

Engaging your cat's mind and body with mental and physical enrichment is key. Provide your cat with toys and engage them in play. Toys can be store bought or made from safe items around the house.

Stress and new foods can cause a lack of appetite.

CCAC feeds Purina Cat Chow. At first, leave out small amounts of food and water add a special treat such as canned food (Fancy Feast is a common one) to encourage eating. If the cat has not eaten or drank anything in 24 hours or seems lethargic or sick within 10 days of adoption, contact your vet.

Supervise all interactions with children and animals.

Do not allow children to disturb the cat while they are eating or using the litter box.

Vet and health care

Your new family member is spayed or neutered, has received dewormer and age-appropriate vaccines.

- schedule a wellness and microchip appointment with your vet
- annual shots and checkup
- flea and tick preventative

Adapted from the SafeHavenHumane.org article, "<https://safehavenhumane.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Adoption-Counseling-for-Foster-Parents.pdf>"

Please call CCAC with any questions!



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