

Useful contact information:

Worming and flea treatment

Fleas (right) carry diseases and can carry worms (bottom right), it is best that when you take your pet to register at the veterinary surgery to ask about their preferred worming and flea treatment and how often it should be done.



Vaccination

It is best to have your new pet vaccinated against any of the nasty diseases that they are at risk from. Some of these are potentially fatal. Vaccinations can be done from 9 weeks in cats and 8 weeks in dogs, these are usually two injections, which are two to four weeks apart, and a yearly booster after that.

Neutering

Unless you have a pedigree which you plan to breed from, or take it to shows then it is a good idea to get them neutered, this can stop lots of problems in later life.

In the bitch and queen (females) the ovaries and the uterus is removed in the dog and tom (males) the testicles are removed. The age for this to be done is around 6 months of age as this is when sexual maturity happens. Some practices like the bitches to have their first season so ask your local veterinarian.

Insurance

Ask your veterinary surgeon or nurse about pet insurance, it is highly recommended and causes peace of mind in case your pet has an accident as veterinary bills can be hundreds of pounds.

The Kennel Club

0870 606 6750

www.thekennelclub.org.uk

The Dogs Trust

www.dogstrust.org.uk

02078 370006

Cats Protection

www.cats.org.uk

08702 099 099

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

www.rcvs.org.uk

02072 222001



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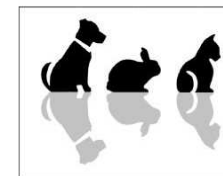
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Your first kitten or
puppy



Be prepared!

Here's a list of things you should get before owning either a kitten or puppy:

- Bowls (two, one for food and one for water)
- Food
- Toys
- Collar (and a lead for a dog)
- Bed
- Blanket
- Combs and brushes

A few things just for kitten:

- Cat carrier
- Scratching post
- Litter tray
- Cat litter

Best age

Kittens are usually weaned off their mother around 7-8 weeks; this is the age when they are ready to go in a new home. Puppies are weaned at around the same age, though the mother begins to gradually discourage them feeding from 3 weeks. If wanting a puppy then 8 weeks is a good age to look for as they are still in an early learning stage of their life.

Ease them in

When first introducing your new arrival in to your home try and make it fairly quiet for them. Take them to a quiet room where they can get use to their surroundings and absorb the feel of there new home, try to steer away from letting them explore the vastness of your house for the first few hours as it may be too much all at once. Once in the house talk reassuringly to them and stroke gently and don't make sudden movements so they know you're there and that it is ok. If there is another animal in the house introduce them gradually and in as neutral place as you can, gradually increasing the time they are together.

Place the bed in a warm draught free environment where they can feel at rest.

Diet

When first arriving at home you should have some food from the place where you collected your new friend. If you do wish to change the diet at all make a gradual change over 5-7 days to avoid disrupting their digestive system.

Both kittens and puppies should be fed around 3-4 times daily until they are around 6 months of age. It is important to remember that you are feeding for growth as well as weight so use the manufactures guidelines on the back of the pack mixed with a bit of common sense.

Water should always be readily available for any pet.

Teething

Mouthing/biting and chewing are a big part of removing the baby teeth and cutting out the adult teeth. This should only happen in the first 6 months of life, however if a game is made of these behaviours, they can become unnecessary and unwanted traits.



Litter training/housetraining

Kittens learn behaviours involved for eliminating faeces and urine from their mothers so you just need to teach them where to go. Use a large plastic tray, large enough for the whole kitten to fit in and allow for enough covering of litter so that the faeces can be covered. There are a wide range of litters you can buy so buy in small amounts and experiment with what you cat likes best.

Encourage using the tray, placing him in the tray immediately as he wakes, as he finishes eating or when he starts scratching, sniffing and crouching around.

Site the tray in a private place away from his food and water, away from loud noises and foot traffic.

Remove deposits promptly, poor hygiene will encourage a lack of use.

Clean tray with dilute mild disinfectants so you don't destroy the scent left there, take care as bleach and some other

disinfectants are toxic.

Puppies have small bladder and bowel systems so need to eliminate urine and faeces often. Try to get a routine going with the puppy, placing him on newspaper when he needs to eliminate faeces and urine, signs to watch for are circling and sniffing around scratching, by doing this the puppy will build up an association with the paper and passing motions. Place the newspaper by a back door so that when the puppy goes to use the paper you can follow and open the door for them letting them out in to the garden.

Never scold a puppy for soiling inappropriately this will not help the situation, instead praise them when they go in the right place.

To start with to assist with the training process take your puppy out for short regular walks, as soon as he gets up, half an hour after meals and just before bed times.

Identification

Microchips (right) are by far the best form of identification in the modern day. It is implanted into the scruff of your pet's neck and is the size of a grain of rice. It is irreversible, permanent and a much preferred form of identification by people in the animal care industry today.



Other forms of identification can be bought such as tags to put on collars but these can be broken off easily or get damaged and become unreadable. Care also must be taken with cats and collars as ill-fitting ones can result in injury or strangulation.

All dogs must have visible identification on their collars by law, so maybe useful to always have spares.

Grooming

Regular grooming and combing helps to build up a bond with your pet, start from an early age so that they can grow accustomed to being groomed. Remember that different breeds require different levels of grooming and possibly different types of brushes.