

Kitten Cheat Sheet

Here are answers to the most common kitten questions and simple suggestions to make life with your new pet easier. Most tips will seem like common sense. (That's the idea.)

This page is not intended to be an all-inclusive set of answers to every kitten problem. Should you have any questions not addressed below, please don't hesitate to call our office!

Baths

- Bathing cats is very simple: You don't need to, cats are self cleaning. You only need to bathe your kitten if your veterinarian recommends it using a medicated shampoo or if your kitten is extremely dirty with mud, ink, or the like.
- If you need to bathe your kitten, please call North Shore Veterinary Clinic for help or recommendations specifically for her.

Diet

- Feed your kitten specially formulated kitten food until your kitten reaches 10-12 months of age. We recommend choosing one of the major pet food suppliers, such as Iams/Eukanuba, Science Diet, Purina or Royal Canin.
- Kittens do not need wet or canned food. They will do just fine on a diet of dry food only. Cats simply prefer canned food to dry because it seems to taste better.
- If you have a kitten at home with other cats on a weight loss program, feeding a high calorie kitten food can become problematic. Unfortunately, in such situations there is no easy answer. Please call North Shore Veterinary Clinic for help with your particular situation.
- Do NOT feed raw food to kittens or cats.

Litter Training

- Simply show your kitten the location of the litter box and she will take things from there.
- Kittens rarely have accidents outside the litter box unless that have a behavioral or medical issue. If your kitten has accidents, please call North Shore Veterinary Clinic and describe the problem to us. There is a good chance your kitten needs veterinary attention.

Multi-Cat Household

- To introduce a new kitten to a house with feline occupants should proceed slowly. For help please consult our [Feline Introductory Guidelines](#).

Outdoor or Indoor

- Keep your kitten indoors at all times. Kittens are much more susceptible than an adult cat to the dangers outside the home. Their immune systems have not fully developed to handle everything they might face.
- If you must allow your adult cat outdoors, make sure all her vaccines are current and have a fecal sample checked twice yearly.
- For the best interests of your cat, simply keep kittens and adults indoors.

Scratching And Declawing

- Kittens will scratch toys and furniture and even you by accident. To minimize problems, keep your kittens nails trimmed or have him/her declawed.
- "Declawing" can be a highly emotional issue for pet owners. We do not encourage the procedure or discourage it. We will help each family decide what is best for them and their kitten. The strongest influencing factors in this decision are safety in the home and your kitten's potential medical issues.

Children

- Kittens are cute and furry and a major temptation to hold and cuddle, especially for young children. However, we recommend that you do not allow little kids to pick up kittens because they do not understand feline body language. Little children will probably not allow kittens to leave when they are ready to go, they tend to hold on tighter. In response, kittens will claw and bite to escape. Everyone then becomes angry with the kitten when really it is no one's fault: the kitten doesn't understand what is happening and neither does the young child.