



Characters

Cats of Distinction

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KITTEN FEEDING & CARE INSTRUCTIONS

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Characters Cattery is very happy that you have chosen to adopt one of our kittens and hope that you and your kitten will have a long and happy relationship. We hand raise and love each of our kittens so we are counting on you to do your part to make sure your kitten is raised in a healthy and caring manner. The following guidelines describe what we expect from you as a responsible owner.

First and Foremost: In general, cats tend to be more independent and unique than dogs. Every kitten is born with distinct personality traits, which need to be recognized and respected. We do our best to hand raise each of our kittens to be loving people-oriented pets.

Moving to a new home can be a traumatic event for a young kitten. Once in their new home, they will probably want to explore their new environment and find some hidey-holes. Once they feel safe and secure, they will venture out to meet their new people. I strongly recommend that you let them make the first move. Until they get to know you, I don't recommend you be too "grabby". If they are not feeling secure, being picked up and held just makes them feel trapped and all they will want to do by instinct is escape. Let them adjust to you and your relationship will proceed much better. Before you know it you will have a lifelong companion. Cats live as long as 18 years, so you have plenty of time to get to know each other.

I do recommend that when you first bring your kitten home you immediately place it in the litter box so that the kitten will know where it is to be found. This will reduce insecurity on the part of the kitten and prevent accident cleanups on your part.

Tip - Tempting new kittens with a wiggly piece of yarn or feather toy can do wonders in getting them to "come out" and play.

Feeding: Your new kitten has been eating small servings (about a tablespoon) of [Wellness Chicken Formula Canned Cat Food](#) first thing in the morning and again about 6 o'clock in the evening. We buy this by the case from Agway, but it is available at most high end pet stores such as [Creature Comforts](#) in the Northgate Plaza in Binghamton, NY. We add just a little warm water (about a teaspoon) and stir which makes a gravy/broth that the kittens love. If refrigerated, make sure the food is warmed to room temperature or slightly warmer before feeding. We do this microwaving for 5-10 seconds and then testing for hotspots with a finger. Room temperature, fresh from the can is fine. We also have been providing a bowl of dry cat food available to the kitten at all times. Recently we have been putting out bowls of [4health All Life Stages Cat Formula](#) and [4health Grain Free Whitefish, Pea & Potato with Real Turkey Recipe](#) that our cats enjoy. This is available from [Tractor Supply Company](#). We also like [Rachael Ray Nutrish Zero Grain Natural Dry Cat Food, Chicken & Potato Recipe](#) Available at [Walmart](#). Other brands that we have used and recommend include [Innova EVO Turkey and](#)

[Chicken Formula Dry Cat and Kitten Food](#), [Wellness CORE Grain Free Original Formula Dry Cat Food](#), and [Canidae pure ELEMENTS Grain Free Formula Dry Cat Food](#). These are all high quality, high protein cat foods with no wheat gluten, corn gluten or chicken or meat by-product meal, any of which is potentially harmful to cats. Locally, these brands are usually available from [Creature Comforts](#) in the Northgate Plaza in Binghamton, NY. All are available to be ordered on-line at www.petfooddirect.com or www.pet360.com.

We have also found that our cats and older kittens really like [Friskies Party Mix Naturals](#) treats. Our cats seem to prefer the chicken flavored, but they have also enjoyed the salmon and tuna. We are sparing with these as they do contain corn gluten, but the kitties relish them like they were candy.

If you decide to change brands of cat food, please choose one with high amount of protein and low ash and magnesium content. High ash/magnesium content can lead to a condition where the cat can develop crystallization or stones in the urinary tract, a potentially deadly condition. Also avoid cat food made with chicken or meat by-product meal. By-product meal includes ground up organs which may contain unsafe levels of hormones. If you change the diet of the kitten, we recommend you do so gradually over a 7-day period to prevent gastric upset.

Examples of low quality foods to avoid: Anything you can find in a grocery store will be low end, Purina, Iams, Eukanuba, Science Diet, Royal Canin, Whiskas, Fancy Feast, Friskies, Meow Mix. Examples of high quality foods to look for: Innova, Wellness, Solid Gold, Canidae, Fromm Four Star, Merrick, GO Natural, Nature's Variety Prairie, Nature's Logic, Artemis Fresh Mix, Timber Wolf Organics.

A great option is to go with an entirely grain-free diet. Diets high in grain have been attributed to problems with diabetes in cats. Cats are carnivores, so why should there be grain in their diet? Many of the high quality foods now put out grain-free formulas. Some good brands include: Innova EVO, Wellness CORE, Blue Wilderness, Nature's Variety Instinct, Orijen, Horizon Legacy, Merrick Before Grain, Fromm Surf & Turf, Now!, Solid Gold Indigo Moon, ZiwiPeak, and Taste of the Wild.

Make sure that a source of cool clean water is always available to your kitten. If you use a bowl or dish be sure to clean the dish and change the water daily. We do not recommend a plastic dish as cats have been known to react to the plastic and develop a type of acne on their chin & lips. We use a stainless steel (not plastic) pet water fountain that filters and aerates the water.

Cats benefit from some vegetable matter in their diet. Many owners grow some grass in a small low planter for their cats to munch on, both for a healthy diet, and to distract them from other household plants, many of which are poisonous. It does not take a lot, just a small clay flower pot is sufficient. In general, we have had the best success using "catgrass" seed mixtures that contain oats, and maybe wheat or millet. Digging up grass from outside for use indoors is not recommended because of the possibility of parasites, fungus, pesticides, etc.

Tip 1 - Never feed cold food directly from the refrigerator. Food should be at room temperature. If you heat up refrigerated cat food in a microwave, be sure to test it before serving to make sure it is not hot!

Tip 2 - I don't recommend that you ever feed a kitten people food directly from your hand or from the table. You want the cat to be coming to you for petting and love, not for food. Once fed from the hand, every time you reach to pet, they will instead be looking for food in your fingers. Once started, hard to stop.

Grooming: Himalayans, like all Persians, are a longhaired breed. Routine brushing (which both you and the kitten will enjoy) will keep the kitten's coat healthy and prevent matting. We start out using a soft nylon bristle brush on our kittens and later use a flat brush with short spring metal teeth. You should brush your Himalayan daily.

Himalayans naturally grow an under layer of winter fur as cold weather approaches. In the late winter/early spring they shed this layer so you will need to brush well to remove this fur or the cat's coat will become matted. We recommended using a comb or a flat brush with short spring metal teeth for this task. An ounce of prevention here is definitely worth a pound of cure. If you find that a mat has developed, we have found that using a Dematting tool, which has curved cutting teeth arranged in a safe design, works well to break up the mat so that it can be brushed out. This eliminates the need to cut the mats out with scissors which will leave ugly bare spots.

Himalayans generally have flatter faces than most other breeds of cat. However, originally being a crossbreed between a Persian and a Siamese, we have found that Himalayans can have noses that range from one that is more pointed and longer reminiscent of a Siamese, a shorter flatter "pet" nose that is not pushed in, the somewhat pushed in nose known as a "doll-face" or "baby-face", and the "extreme-face" with the very pushed in nose of the Persian breed. The pushed in type of facial structure, although highly prized by the owners of show cats, may cause a tendency for the animal to develop blocked tear ducts. We recommended that you periodically use a warm damp washcloth to clean away the hardened "sleep" deposits that build up to prevent any blockage from occurring. The shorter and more pushed in the nose, the more care you will need to provide.

Litter box: Your kitten has been trained to use a litter box. We tend to use "Fresh Step" litter, but any brand should suffice. We recommend that you do not use a clay litter for very young kittens. There are reports that the kittens might ingest the clay and build up a blockage in their little intestines. A better choice might be something like "[Yesterday's News](#)" a brand of litter made from paper formed into pellets.

Generally, it is recommended that you have a separate litter box for each cat in your household. You may be able to get along with just one if you only have a few cats who all get along and are healthy. Be sure to remove and replace the litter on a regular basis. You could opt for one of the self cleaning litter boxes but our research seems to indicate that they do not last very long.

Note: Pregnant women should not be handling the litter box.

Flea Control: Our cats are strictly indoor pets and have never set foot outside the house, except when we take them to the vet. As such, we have had very few problems with fleas or other parasites. If you do allow your cat to go outside, you can count on having a flea problem. The vet has warned us that a cat that is allowed to roam outside may pick up a fungus or be exposed to feline leukemia from other cats. If they are allowed to catch and eat birds or mice, they will likely get worms and need to be dewormed.

We recommend that you never use a flea collar on a Persian or Himalayan kitten as this reportedly can be fatal. The long hair of the Himalayan gets tangled on the collar, the underlying skin becomes raw & irritated, then the poison from the collar gets into the bloodstream. Flea collars are not very effective anyway. If you experience a flea problem, you should use a vet recommended product such as Advantage or Frontline. We have found these products to be very effective and safe.

Tip - Don't leave low lying windows open during the summer, even with a screen in place. Fleas

can and will enter your home this way.

Veterinary Care: Your kitten has been vet checked and vaccinated. We guarantee that the kitten is healthy at the time it leaves our care. You will ensure that the cat will continue to receive veterinary care and booster shots as required.

The cat will not be denied needed veterinary attention. You will come to know your cat's personality. If it should suddenly start to act out of character such as become sluggish or grouchy, or if you notice the inner eyelid partially covering the eye, or red rimmed eyelids, you should immediately have the cat checked out by the vet. If you are unsure whether or not the animal is in need of medical services, a vet will be contacted, the situation will be explained, and the vet's advice will be acted upon.

Vaccination Schedule: Depending on the age of your kitten, where you live and if your kitten will be an indoor or outdoor cat, your veterinarian is the best source of information for determining what vaccinations your kitten will require. Following is an example of a vaccination schedule that your veterinarian may recommend for a new cat.

| Disease | Age (weeks) 1st Vaccination | Age (weeks) 2nd Vaccination | Age (months) Boosters |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Feline Panleukopenia | 6-10 | 12-16 | 12 |
| Feline Rhinotracheitis | 8-10 | 12-16 | 12 |
| Feline Calicivirus | 6-10 | 12-16 | 12 |
| Rabies | 12-16 | 52 | 12 or 36* |
| Feline Leukemia Virus | 10 | 12 and 24 | 12 |
| Feline Chlamydiosis | 6-10 | 12-16 | 12 |

*Depending on type

Note: We do not routinely vaccinate for Feline Leukemia (FLV) as our cats are strictly indoor cats and are never exposed to other animals. The vet told us that there have been some reports of a certain percentage of cats reacting poorly to the FLV vaccine and having health problems as a result, and therefore didn't automatically recommend the FLV shot for strictly indoor cats. If you decide to let your cat outside, it is recommended that you talk to a vet about this vaccination as the potential for exposure is much higher.

Spaying/Neutering: You will have the kitten you purchased from us spayed/neutered. This should be done by the age of 6 months, before the onset of puberty.

Neutering will prevent the male cat from developing objectionable behavior such as territoriality, fighting and urine marking. Neutering makes your cat more calm and affectionate. They take more interest in their owners and will likely become more people oriented.

Spaying will eliminate heat cycles of female cats, which usually occur several times a year, and behaviors associated with heats - kneading, howling and restlessness. It will reduce the incidence of urine spraying. A spayed female is a more attentive and loving pet, because her energy isn't constantly directed toward finding a mate.

If it is your intention to breed your cat, this must be discussed and approved by the seller at the time of sale.

Declawing: You will not have the kitten you bought from us declawed. Declawing is not an acceptable option for the beautiful, loving animal that depends on you. The reasons to avoid declawing are compelling, for you as well as for your cat.

Declawing is literally the act of maiming a cat, a mistake that can lead to physical, emotional and behavioral complications. It is erroneous to think that declawing a cat is a trivial procedure similar to trimming fingernails. Declawing is an irreversible surgical procedure that involves amputating the last joint of the cat's "toes." It is a very painful procedure with strong potential to secondary complications. This is cruel and leaves your pet unable to protect themselves from dogs, etc. and unable to perform the agile and acrobatic movements that their instinct tells them they should be able to do. A cat's claws are a vital part of its anatomy, essential to balance, mobility and survival.

Scratching is a territorial instinct by which cats place their mark and establish their turf. Through scratching, cats mark their domains with more than just visible signs of claw marks. Cat's paws also have scent glands that leave their own special scent on their territory. If you provide the cat with a sisal rope scratching post or something similar that the cat is allowed to claw, then the tendency to use the furniture in that manner will be much smaller.

Parting Company: No cat/kitten from this cattery may be sold or given to an animal shelter, sold or given to a pet store, abandoned, or sold or given to a laboratory. If for some reason you must give up your cat and cannot find it a good home willing to follow these instructions, you should contact us and we will attempt to assist you.