

Your New Cat

Congratulations! We are happy and thankful that you have decided to adopt a new cat from our shelter. We want to help make this transition as easy as possible so that you and your new cat can spend the rest of your lives together. You can always contact Humane Fort Wayne for questions, or consult this book which has many tips and suggestions to help you get started.

The First Day Home

Now that you have decided to add a furry friend to your family, you must be patient. This is a huge change for your cat and it will take time for them to adjust to not only you and your family, but to the new surroundings, smells, and sounds.

The first day you have your new cat at home should be spent allowing them to get used to their new home. Having them start out in a quiet, safe room will help them to adjust. Cats are territorial animals so they will do best if they get used to one small part of the house at a time before moving on to explore more. Allow time before introducing your new cat to other animals in the home.

Make sure to visit your cat regularly as they become comfortable in their safe room. Everything will be new and stressful to them, so let them adjust at their own pace. Depending on the cat, it may only take a few days to become completely comfortable, or it could take months. A good way to tell that your cat is adjusting is when they are eating, drinking, and using the litterbox normally. Your cat should also not run and hide when someone enters their safe room. When you think your cat is ready to explore the rest of the house, simply open the door and let them explore.

If your new cat goes three days without eating, that is an emergency. Contact us and your vet right away. Sometimes a cat who is scared can, or will, starve themselves.

Taking your pet to the vet after being adopted is highly encouraged. This can be a stressful event for your already scared cat, so try to make it positive by bringing along treats.

Supplies You'll Need

Food

When switching your cat's food, try to make the transition slowly. Suddenly changing your cat's diet can upset their stomach.

Water

Cats need fresh water available to them at all times. Some cats like running water, so a good solution is cat water fountains. They can be found in your local pet store or online. If you keep the fountain clean and the water is fresh, it can also help your cat to drink more water.

Litterbox, Litter, and a Scoop: It is recommended to get two litterboxes for your first cat and then an additional one for every other cat in the house. For example, if you have two cats, it would be best to have three litterboxes around the house. There are different types of litterboxes you could get for your new cat. It should be large enough for your cat's whole body to fit inside and be able to turn around in. There are also a variety of litters to choose from. Unscented litters are usually a good choice. Once you choose a litter, stick with it so that the cat can get used to it. If you do decide to change the litter, make the transition slow so the cat can adjust. Make sure you get a scooper and scoop the litterbox daily! Completely dump the box once a week. Don't clean the box with heavy scented cleaners.

Scratcher: Scratching is a natural behavior for cats so giving them an outlet will prevent them from scratching on your furniture. Some cats have preferences on the type of scratcher. It may take some trial and error to find the perfect scratcher for your cat.

Declawing is a permanent physical change that can lead to behavioral issues in your new pet. There are many ways to manage scratching without declawing. For more information on scratching and declawing, look at pages 21-22.

Cat Tower: Cat towers are a great way to give your cat more space to run and play, which can be very helpful in a house with multiple cats. Much like scratchers, cat towers come in a variety of materials, shapes, and sizes.

Toys: Cats love toys! There are a wide variety of toys that cats enjoy ranging from easy, cheap, and homemade toys like crumpled paper to fancy and expensive toys from the pet store. Having the toys in different spots around the house, or giving the cat a different selection every once in a while, keeps things fresh. Playing with your cat by throwing their toys for them or using an interactive toy, like a wand, can allow you and your cat to bond. Always supervise your cat with new toys. Don't give cats long strings or ribbons that they can swallow.

