

40 Ways to Protect Your Cat

Keep your cat safe by adopting and following these safety guidelines.

Beth Krippner

12. If at all possible, get your cat first, then add a dog to the household, not the other way around, Lachman says. This may reduce fighting over territories.

13. When introducing a kitten to your household, provide food, water, a litterbox, scratching post, bed and toys, and confine your kitten to a safe room (a bathroom or spare bedroom) for the first few days, and any time you cannot directly supervise him. A pheromone diffuser in this safe room can help keep a cat calm.

14. Keep all yarn, string, thread and needles in a secure cabinet. Yarn or string can become caught on a cat's barbed tongue and may be swallowed.

15. Don't give cows milk to kittens or adult cats because it may cause gas and diarrhea.

16. Certain human foods and medicines are extremely harmful to cats. Do not leave chocolate, onions or medicines out on counters, Lachman says.

17. Keep your cat's identification tag or microchip information current in case your cat wanders away.

18. Train your cat to stay away from the stove at all times, even if not in use, by squirting him with a spray bottle when he gets too close.

19. Do not feed your cat dog food. Cats require different nutrients and more protein in their diets than dogs do.

20. Do not attempt to pick up your cat when he shows signs of defensiveness or aggression. Although your cat adores you, he may still bite or scratch you out of fear.

21. Kittens love to explore, so block their access to the area behind the refrigerator, bookcase or couch so they won't get stuck or injured.

22. Before starting your engine, honk your car horn to scare away any cats sleeping in the engine compartment.