

## Kitten Ownership From A to Z

**Let this alphabetical list guide you through the process of acquiring and caring for a new kitten.**

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**M - Milk**The only milk your kitten needs is the kind its mother provided during nursing. Giving your cat or kitten milk can cause diarrhea.

**N - Naps**Cats and kittens typically sleep up to 16 hours a day. Most of these snoozes are short catnaps. Do not bother your pet during a nap ... they will look so cute and peaceful, but they appreciate the interruption as much as you would.

**O - Observation**Careful observation of your cat's normal behavior will quickly alert you if something's wrong. Cats are notorious for hiding illness and injury, so it's up to owners to quickly catch on when a kitten is not quite acting like itself. Have your pet's eating and drinking habits changed? Is the litterbox cleaner or filthier than normal? Does your pet seem lethargic? Does it limp when walking or have trouble getting up? If so, it's time for a visit to the veterinarian.

**P - Products**The basic products you need before bringing home your new kitten are: food and water bowls, food, litter, a litterbox and scoop, a carrier, a collar and identification tag, a brush and flea comb, nail clippers, a scratching post and toys.

**Q - Quality time**Often considered independent creatures, cats actually need to spend time with their family members. Play sessions with interactive toys are fun for you and your kitten. Some kittens especially love lap time when you're watching TV or chatting on the phone. Brushing your kitten also offers a chance to bond. Make yourself available and your kitten will let you know when it wants to spend quality time with you. Don't take it personal if these times are short ... like a toddler, your kitten can easily be distracted.

**R - Roughhousing**Never use your hands or feet in playing with your kitten. It might seem cute now, but bites and scratches can be very serious, and you do not want to train your cute little kitten to become a full-grown terror. If your kitten likes to pounce at your hands and feet, distract it by tossing a toy away from you or squirt it with water. Never hit your cat. If you and your human family members are consistent, your kitten should quickly learn that rough play with human body parts does not yield good results.