



Cat Care Guide For New Pet Owners

Contact the SPCA of The Triad during your foster-to-adopt period if signs of Lack of Appetite, Diarrhea, Green Nasal/ Eye Discharge, or Lack of Bowel Movements Continue For More Than 24 Hours. You can call us and leave a message, email us, or call or text one of the three emergency contact numbers on your foster-to-adopt paperwork.

Introduction Period:

When bringing a cat or kitten home, set up a particular portion of your home as their "Space"; this can be the bathroom or a room where the litter box will stay. Your home is a new environment full of various scents and unfamiliar sounds, so in the beginning, an adjustment period with short visits helps gain lots of trust; they will tell you when they are ready!

If you are already a pet owner, [slowly introduce the new cat to your other pets](https://www.comfortzone.com/behavior-blog/new-pet/introducing-cat-at-home) (<https://www.comfortzone.com/behavior-blog/new-pet/introducing-cat-at-home>). Keep your new cat in a separate room and feed your pets on either side of a closed door (Unless you have a pet that has food aggression or protection over food). Put each pet's blanket in the other pet's room and swap rooms sometimes so they get used to each other's smells. Eventually, graduate to feeding them on either side of a closed gate and then try supervised visits. Watch their body language at each step so you can separate them if needed.

Feeding/ Water Directions:

Review the feeding chart provided by SPCA of the Triad if you have a kitten. Our general recommendation for feeding adults is as follows:

1. ½ Can (1.5oz) of canned wet food 2x a day; if they do not drink very much water, add a bit to their wet food.
2. ¼ Cup of dry food 2x a day (if they finish it) as a snack
3. WE DO NOT RECOMMEND FREE FEEDING AS IT CAUSES MAJOR WEIGHT GAIN MOST OF THE TIME!

Provide fresh, clean water at all times, and wash and refill your cat's water bowls daily.

You will need designated food and water dishes when you bring them home. Go with a wider, shallower dish when possible because some kitties have sensitive whiskers that hurt when they push their face into narrower openings to eat or drink.

Keep food and water separated; many cats will not drink the amount of water they need if it is right next to a food bowl or their litter box.

It's important to understand that cats are "obligate carnivores," meaning they require nutrients only found in animal products. While humans may opt for a vegetarian diet, that's not an option for our four-legged friends. On a macro-nutrient level, cats need a diet high in protein, moderately high in fat, and very low in carbohydrates. And, of course, cats need to consume water. Because some need to drink more from their water bowl, their food source must also contain water; this helps prevent potential urinary issues.

Litter Box Tips:

The vet recommendation is one litter box per cat + an extra one. Example: 2 cats= 3-4 litter boxes! This recommendation prevents potential accidents if the cat is picky regarding their litter box.

Their litter boxes should be in a quiet, accessible location. In a multi-level home, there should be a litter box per floor.

Avoid moving the box unless necessary, but if you must do so, move the box just a few inches per day. Keep in mind that cats won't use a messy, smelly litter box, so scoop solid wastes out of the box at least once a day.

Clean out/ wash the litter box with a mild detergent and refill it at least once a week; you can do this less frequently if using clumping litter (about

every 10-14 days). Don't use ammonia, deodorants, or scents, especially lemon, when cleaning the litter box.

If Cat is Scratching:

We recommend that you have a sturdy scratching post (3 feet in height) so that your new friend has somewhere they can scratch.

If they scratch your furniture, place a scratching pad in the area.

Get in a routine of trimming your cat's nails so that they remain blunt so they are less likely to create any damage to furniture

House Plants and Common Ingredients That Cats Are Allergic To:

- Asparagus fern
- Corn plant
- Dieffenbachia
- Elephant ear
- Lillies
- Cyclamen
- Heartleaf
- Philodendron
- Jade plant
- Aloe plant
- Satin pothos
- Chocolate
- Grapes and raisins
- Raw meat, eggs, and fish
- Raw dough
- Onions and garlic
- Alcohol
- Coffee and caffeine
- Milk and other dairy products
- Foods containing Xylitol