



# Congratulations on your new cat!

YOUR LIFESAVING DECISION TO ADOPT A CAT MEANS THE WORLD TO YOUR NEW FELINE FAMILY MEMBER. WITH JUST A LITTLE PREPARATION, YOU CAN HELP ENSURE THAT YOUR NEW CAT'S TRANSITION FROM SHELTER TO HOME WILL BE A SMOOTH AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE FOR BOTH OF YOU.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR NEW CAT

Your new pet will depend on you for everything, from healthy food to affection, exercise and training. It sounds like a lot, but what could be more rewarding? Here are some things you'll need before bringing your cat home:

- \* FOOD AND WATER BOWLS
- \* DRY FOOD
- \* WET FOOD
- \* TREATS
- \* BREAKAWAY COLLAR
- \* CAT BED
- \* TOYS
- \* LITTER BOX
- \* LITTER & SCOOP
- \* SCRATCHING POST



## IDENTIFICATION



Your cat has a microchip that comes with free registration. You should receive an email from 24PetWatch.com within one business week confirming registration. Please log in and make sure all of your contact information is correct and remember to keep it current. We recommend keeping a **breakaway** collar with ID tag on cats at all times. A free ID tag is provided with every adoption! We don't want to jinx it, but if your cat ever goes missing view our Lost and Found Guide at [bit.ly/lostfoundaac](http://bit.ly/lostfoundaac)

## WELCOME HOME

Some cats adjust to the move with little effort, while others take a while to become familiar and relaxed in their new home. So be patient and give your new cat a few days to settle in. If she prefers to view the world from under the couch until she feels safe to venture out, that's ok! Just allow her to have the space and time she needs. Provide places of her own, up high and at floor level, so she has easy access to a safe spot away from people and other pets. When she is in a hiding place, do not disturb her.

- \* It's a good idea to confine your new cat to one room for a few days to help them acclimate to the sights, smells, and scents of your new home.
- \* Make sure that she has easy access to fresh food and water, as well as a clean litter box (or two).
- \* Cats love toys! Simple toys, such as paper bags (with the handles removed for safety) or cardboard boxes with holes cut in them, provide loads of entertainment and places to hide.
- \* Kids love pets and it is natural for them to want to hold your new cat. However, some cats don't like to be held or might not want to be picked up when they first arrive home.



A BREAKAWAY COLLAR, AKA QUICK-RELEASE COLLAR, IS DESIGNED TO SNAP OPEN IF THE CAT GETS CAUGHT ON SOMETHING. THEY ARE MUCH SAFER!



## DIET

Cats eat less when they are stressed, and moving to a new home is stressful, so don't be surprised or concerned if food is ignored at first, especially while you are watching. But if your new cat doesn't eat and drink overnight after everyone else has gone to bed, try mixing a little bit of extra tasty food, such as canned cat food, into his dry food. You can feed your cat once or twice a day, or you can leave food out all day (called "free feeding"). Be aware, though, that many cats who are free-fed do not properly control their food intake and may become overweight, which predisposes them to health problems. You might want to have dry food available all day and then open a can of wet food when you get home so that your cat gives you an extra-special welcome when you walk through the door.



It's important that you feed them a high-quality food, but that doesn't mean it has to be expensive! At AAC, most of our cats are fed Purina Pro Plan. Ask your vet or local pet store for suggestions.



Change the water in the bowl every day and clean the bowl regularly. Cats need to drink plenty of water, especially if they eat dry food only, but they don't like to drink dirty water (who does?) and can easily become dehydrated if they don't find the water appetizing.

## WATER

WATER FOUNTAINS MAKE DRINKING WATER MORE FUN!



ALL CATS BENEFIT FROM A WET FOOD DIET, BUT MALE CATS ESPECIALLY DO. THIS IS BECAUSE THEY'RE MORE PRONE TO DEVELOPING URINARY TRACT ISSUES AND CRYSTALS IF DEHYDRATED. WET FOOD HELPS PREVENT DEHYDRATION!

## LITTER BOX

Get a new litter box for your cat, preferably one that's uncovered. Covered litter boxes can trap odors inside the box, which is nice for you, but not for your cat. Cats are usually quite clean; they are sensitive to the smell of urine and feces, as well as deodorizers. Be sure to scoop out the box every day and deep clean it as often as needed, but at least once every two weeks. When you clean the litter box, use a mild soap, not strong-smelling detergents or ammonia. Remember, if you don't like the smell of the litter box, your cat probably doesn't either. Keep it clean and you'll have a happy cat.



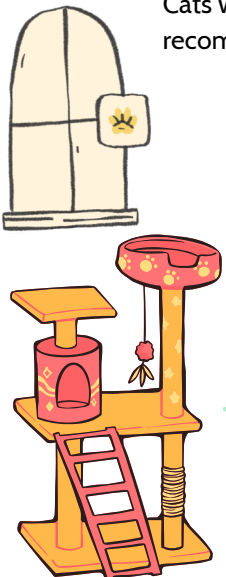
WE RECOMMEND ONE LITTER BOX PER CAT PLUS ONE EXTRA. SO 2 BOXES FOR ONE CAT, 3 BOXES FOR 2 CATS, ETC.

## INDOORS VS. OUTDOORS

Cats who are kept indoors tend to live longer, healthier lives, so we strongly recommend that cats not be allowed outdoors.

If you are going to let your cat outside, keep in mind that there will be hazards that you cannot control, such as cars, dogs, wildlife, extreme weather, poisoning, parasites, and accidents. If you still plan to let your adult cat outside, wait *at least* 7-10 days or until you are certain that she is happy and adjusted to living in your home.

- \* If you want peace of mind, supervise them while outside. Try harness training!
- \* To give your cat the outdoor experience with indoor safety, set up a catio, or cat patio. A catio is a secure outdoor enclosure (think screened-in porch) that keeps cats entertained and safe.
- \* For enrichment, set up a bird feeder outside your window. Do something different for your cat every day, like make a fort!



FOR GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT, CONTACT US AT [PET.HELPLINE@AUSTINTEXAS.GOV](mailto:PET.HELPLINE@AUSTINTEXAS.GOV)

