

# Getting Ready For Your New Cat

The best way to ensure that your cat will have a smooth transition to a new home is to have everything ready before he or she arrives.

This is a basic guide to cats' needs. If you have any questions, our friendly and knowledgeable sales staff is always ready to help you determine the best products to care for your pet. By choosing high quality pet food, treats and supplies for your new cat, you will create the perfect environment for a happy, healthy companion.

## **Educate Yourself First**

A book will help you better understand the needs of each different breed of cat – i.e. temperament and grooming needs. It is important to keep new cats inside your home for the first 2-3 months so they will understand that it is their forever home. This will reduce the odds that they will run away (or get lost) while outside and be unable to find their way back.

## **What Your Cat Will Need:**

### **Quick List of Supplies for a New Cat:**

- Bowls
- Carrier
- Cat Furniture (scratching post)
- ID Tag (recommended for both indoor and outdoor cats)
- Family & Owner Commitment
- Flea & Tick Control
- Grooming Tools (nail clipper, brush, flea comb, etc.)
- Litter, Litter Box & Scoop
- Quick-Release Collar
- Stain & Odor Remover
- Super Premium Diet
- Toys
- Treats

### **Optional Extras:**

- Cat Bed
- Cat Grass
- Catnip
- Leash & Harness

### **Bowls:**

Choose a dish that is large enough to accommodate one serving of pet food and that is easy to clean. Ceramic or stainless steel bowls work the best. Oval-shaped and low-sided bowls are also available to accommodate long whiskers.

### **Carrier:**

Cats can be skittish travelers. It is a good idea to get a carrier that your cat can grow into, to keep your pet safe in the car on trips to the vet. Let your cat sleep and/or play in their carrier

before travel, this will help them acclimate to the space and scent it with their own pheromones.

### **Cat Food:**

A super premium canned, raw, or dry food is a proper diet for your cat. Choose a food with high meat protein content, as cats are true carnivores. Also, look for low magnesium/phosphorus (ash) content in your cat's food, to reduce the chance of urinary tract problems later on. Grain free and low carbohydrate foods are also more digestible for cats. Investing in a good quality food will actually save money – super premium foods have dense nutrition and require less per feeding. This translates to less waste to clean out of the litter box. You can supplement dry food with canned or raw food occasionally or even feed them exclusively. Canned food increases water intake and may be helpful in preventing the formation of urine crystals. **In addition to quality food, it is imperative that your cat also have access to water or be fed a high moisture diet!**

### **Collar:**

Your cat should have a collar with an ID tag and local license if it goes outside at all. A quick-release collar will ensure that your cat does not harm itself if it becomes caught in a tree or high area in your home. Outdoor cats should also have a bell to ensure that your cat is not successful at capturing any small critters which may transmit disease to your pet.

Make sure water is available at all times. Keeping fresh water accessible in multiple locations throughout the house will help to ensure your cat stays hydrated and will reduce the risk of urinary infections. Fountains are another great option to help reduce the risk of urinary infections by providing a source of fresh flowing water for your cat.

### **Scratching:**

Scratching is an instinctive behavior for cats. You must provide them with something appropriate to scratch or they may use something inappropriate (such as your couch or door frame). Scratching posts can be free standing, hung from a doorknob, or mounted on a wall. It can be made of sisal rope, wood, cardboard, or rug remnants. Catnip can be sprinkled on it to help entice your cat to use it. Start early! Scent glands on your cat's paws will mark the post as something appropriate to scratch as they grow. (For more information on scratching see pg. 12.)

### **Flea Comb:**

Use as part of your regular grooming routine. These fine toothed combs will help you detect potential infestations (see pg. 16).

### **Brush:**

Cats shed all year, sometimes heavier than others. This can be a great bonding time for both of you. Cats need to be touched a lot, and grooming helps fulfill this need. Regular grooming easily removes excess hair which can contribute to hairballs and matted fur. Start early.

### **Nail Clippers:**

Clip nails while your cat is young, and do it often – this will get your cat used to having its paws touched and nails clipped.

**Cat Litter:**

It is best to use the kind of litter your cat or kitten has been using at the shelter or their previous home to ease the transition. You can gradually mix in a new litter of your choice. We recommend waiting to change litter after one month with your new cat. There are many different kinds of litter available to suit any budget or lifestyle. (See complete litter guide on pg. 11.)

**Litter Box:**

Purchase a deep box that your cat or kitten will be able to use as an adult. Kittens will climb into it with no problem. A deep box allows the cat to dig and bury. Covered boxes will help contain the litter as cats dig around, and often come with filters to reduce odors. If you have more than one cat, you may need more than one litter box – some cats do not share! We recommend one litter box per cat.

**Litter Scoop:**

Available in plastic or metal, and in a variety of sizes. Use to scoop waste from litter box.

**Stain Remover:**

Every pet owner should have a bottle of enzymatic pet stain and odor remover for those occasional accidents. These all-natural cleaners remove stains and odors effectively so cats will be less likely to re-mark the area.

**Toys:**

Cats love to chase, bat at things and pounce. Small balls, stuffed mice, catnip toys or any toy that has something that dangles or hangs will give your cat hours of play time. Always supervise your cat while they play with toys.

**Treats:**

An occasional treat is fine. There are many on the market, but not everything will be to your cat's liking. Treats should not be fed in place of a meal.

**Cat Grass:**

Chewing greens helps aid in digesting food and hairballs. Giving cats their own grass will also keep them from chewing your plants. Many houseplants are poisonous to your cat. (Please see our list of non-toxic and toxic plants on pages 20 and 21.)

**Catnip:**

Most cats do not react to catnip until they reach adulthood. If you get an older cat, you should definitely invest in it. Otherwise, you can wait until the cat is at least eight months old. Valerian Root and Silver Vine are other alternatives to traditional catnip. Some cats may never react to catnip, to occupy and entertain your cat—try a variety of interactive toys or treat balls.

**Harness & Leash:**

For safe outdoor walks with your indoor cat. A cat does not have the natural inclination to walk on a leash, but in time, your cat can get used to it and you can enjoy time outside together. Let your cat adjust to wearing the harness inside the home, under supervision, for the first few

times, then gradually begin taking the cat outside, wearing the harness, for longer periods of time. This will help ease stress.

**NOTE:** Do not try to walk your cat using a break-away collar as these are designed to release when pressure is applied.