

There are many litter products available including odour controlled, crystallised, paper, wood pine and clumping. Talk to our staff about which is the most appropriate for your needs.

## HEALTH CARE

Kittens and cats have health care requirements throughout their lives.

### THESE INCLUDE:

**Worming:** A kitten should be wormed every two weeks until 12 weeks of age and after that every three to four months for life.

**De-fleaing:** Follow the instructions on your chosen flea product, but it is important to de-flea your cat throughout its life.

**Vaccinations:** Talk to your vet regarding the vaccination requirements but generally they are;

- 1st vaccination – eight to 10 weeks
- 2nd vaccination – 12 to 14 weeks
- Booster vaccinations – yearly.
- De-sexing: We strongly recommend that you spay or neuter your kitten. Talk to your vet regarding this.
- Dental care: Dental care is often overlooked in cats. Super premium food, dental treats and teeth cleaning go a long way in the care of your kitten's teeth from a very young age. Please note that cats cannot tolerate human toothpaste.
- Grooming: Long haired cats require regular grooming. Depending on the cat, this may be daily or weekly. Unattended coats can lead to skin problems.

## SAFETY

Your kitten will have a tendency to get underfoot so just take care when he is very young. They also have a habit of getting into things such as cupboards, drawers and even washing machines! A little vigilance goes a long way at this stage of your kitten's life.

A kitten or cat collar should always be elasticised or quick release. Cats climbing trees can often snag their collars on branches and it is important that they are able to slip out of their collar if this situation arises.

## PLAYTIME

Kittens love to play, climb and scratch and these activities are all part of their natural behaviour patterns and important for their physical development. Providing your kitten with a scratch post or scratch toy is a great idea. You can encourage your kitten to use its scratch post by spraying it with catnip spray and/or playing chase using a teaser. It is best to buy the largest scratch post or pad that you can afford as you really want your cat to scratch upwards in the natural scratching position. Praise him for using this scratch post.

If he starts to scratch your furniture discourage him by spritzing him with a spray bottle filled with water. This should only be used if you catch your kitten while exhibiting this behaviour, not afterwards. Until your kitten is older don't let him have the run of the house when you are not there.

## CAT DOORS

A cat door is a great way of giving your cat its freedom. Training a cat or kitten to use one is best done with patience and food! Start by feeding your kitten near the cat door inside and then near the door outside. Leave the door open for a few days (or when your kitten or cat is in the area). You can do this by attaching a peg to the top of the flap when the flap is open.

Place your cat or kitten's food or a treat on the other side of the door so they can see it through the open door. Encourage him through. Practice this and gradually lower the door so the kitten will get used to moving the cat door out of the way with his head and body. This is a gradual process and forcing your kitten or cat through the door may result in life long phobias, so patience is key.

## KITTEN DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

### Birth to six weeks:

- This is a rapid growth period for a kitten
- They need to be with their mother during this time
- Their eyes will open, their sense of smell develops, teeth come in and ear canals will open
- Socialisation begins.

### Seven weeks to 12 weeks:

- Socialisation and play are a big part of this period.

### Three months to six months:

- Baby teeth are replaced with adult teeth
- Social ranking in your household will begin, if you have an older cat a challenge may arise
- Sexual maturity will begin.

### Six months to 18 months:

- Further exploration of social ranking which may include challenging humans for dominance
- Kittens reach maturity and stop growing.

