

## CASTLKATZ RECOMMENDED KITTEN ITEMS LIST

The following information has been compiled to help you prepare for your new cat/kitten. If you have any questions please call or email and we'll be happy to answer them.

### FOOD AND WATER:

Dry IAMS or Royal Canin kitten or cat food as appropriate to the age of the animal- keep dry food out all the time for free feeding.

Wet- any major brand canned food would be fine. Your kitten has eaten Friskies, Whiskas, and IAMS canned. Your kitten at 16 weeks will probably eat 2-3 six (6) ounce cans of wet food per day. This will vary as your kitten goes into and out of growth spurts. Let him eat all he wants to eat. Do not impose diet restrictions on a kitten.

Fresh water is a must and should be available at all times. Change the water every day and twice a day in the hot summer.

Some plastic dishes can cause problems for cats, especially those of the soft plastic (Tupperware) type. A crockery, glass or stainless steel bowl will be fine for water and dry food that's left out all the time. A plate is needed for wet food as cats really don't like sticking their heads into things to get their food. Again, a glass, hard plastic or porcelain plate serves well. If you are so inclined, paper plates save clean up time and the animals don't object. Your kitten has been eating has been eating from a glass plate (Corelle).

Kittens need lots of food to grow and eat off of a standard saucer-type plate. Feed wet food 3 times a day until the kitten is about 8 months of age and then they eat 2 times a day until they are 2 years old, then once a day is fine. We normally feed in the morning, late afternoon and before bed. The twice a day feedings are breakfast and dinner. This breed is big and many times veterinarians think they're fat when they are not. Their weight is bone/muscle and they should not be allowed to get "sloppy"!! As a good rule of thumb, I expect the kittens to gain about 4 ounces/week (a pound a month) until they are about 7-8 months old and then they start to slow down in their weight gain.

BEHAVIOR NOTE: If your kitten appears to be burying their food that does not mean they don't like it. It means they are not hungry at that time and it's instinct for them to try and bury it so a larger predator won't find the food ...or them. The same behavior applies to their covering their feces. If you offer your kitten wet food and it's not eaten then pick it up and offer wet food again at the next mealtime. Just because you own a new kitten does not mean you are now running a 24-hour deli!

### LITTER:

To get your kitten to be as accommodating as possible, we provide a sample of the current litter being used. Sprinkle a bit of the current litter on the product you have chosen and the kitten will make the connection that this is the litter pan. DO this for about 3 pans of litter and the kitten will easily remember. Purchase a name brand with a minimum of dust and NO added perfumes. If you have access to wood stove pellets, try them and see if you like them. We have found them to be excellent. In addition to being good for the cat, once the solids are scooped out it makes an excellent mulch for bushes, trees and gardens. Johnny Cat, Scamp, and Tidy Cat are all good clay-based products. We use large litter boxes with a dome cover so your kitten will use a covered or open box without difficulty. Preference is yours. If you want to use litter box liners, Feliners is an excellent product. We do not recommend the clumping litters as they do not make it easy for owners to scrub their litter boxes on a weekly basis. Replacing it just gets too expensive and all the "hype" about never having to again clean a litter box is just that- "hype". The clumping litter does not retard viral and bacterial growth as effectively as scrubbing the pan and rinsing with dilute bleach solution (10%). This cleaning routine should be done weekly at a minimum.

### GROOMING:

- Wide toothed metal comb
- Small tooth flea comb
- Nail clippers (human or special animal)
- Q-Tips

We have bathed the kitten before shipping so you will not have to bathe him/her unless you are planning to show. If showing, you would use your show groom routine. For those lucky kittens (they think so) that will not be bathed on a regular basis, there is still some basic weekly grooming that needs doing.

Ears- need to be cleaned gently with dry Q-Tips weekly

Nails- all claws on all four feet need to be clipped weekly. This is an easy procedure that involves clipping the nail growth area (clear or white just like your nails) with a nail clipper. If you are uneasy about the procedure ask your vet to show you the technique

Bathing- If you decide to do a general bathing we recommend a standard pet shampoo (F1R2 is an excellent product) that can be purchased at your pet store or Dawn dish washing liquid diluted 50/50 with water. If you purchase a pet shampoo, purchase a color specific shampoo (blue for blue cats, brown for brown cats etc.- the label should give you this information). If you bathe your kitten make sure the bathing area is warm, towel dry the kitten well. Comb the fur against the grain with a wide tooth comb and allow the kitten to air dry. Comb with the grain once dry.

General brushing- once a week or so brush the kitten against the grain with a your wet hands- this removes the dead hair but does not pull the current, live hair. Rubbing your kittens coat against the grain with wet hands will also remove old dead coat and make your kitten feel extra pampered! If you live in a flea area, periodically comb your kitten with the flea comb and flick the fleas into a soapsuds solution to kill them. This is an effective flea control process. We don't like to dip the cats/kittens in flea dip as the coats are very plush and they have a tendency to hold more solution in their coat than the average cat. There are documented cases of BSH dying after flea dipping so we do not recommend flea dipping. We also do not recommend flea collars for the same reasons- they are very toxic and really unnecessary since your cat/kitten is indoors and the combing can control the process. If you have a flea infestation then this is a different issue and your veterinarian should be consulted. Advantage system has proven safe with BSH and seems effective.

## TOYS:

IF THERE IS A CAT SHOW IN YOUR AREA ATTEND AND SEE ALL THE TOYS AVAILABLE!!! As with human babies, kittens can choke on small objects that come off their toys- remove bells and "eyes" that come off.

Small light balls, Ping-Pong balls and wiffle-balls are fun

Straws (yes, straws and McDonald's are super)- Excellent for teething and when they're "trashed" just throw them away and give them another. Even your non-animal owning friends can pick up this toy for you!

Kitty-Tease - this toy is probably available at your local pet store and the person that invented this should go down in the annals of cat history...cats will wear themselves out with this toy with a willing human on the other end

Cat toys with feathers

Brown paper bags

DO NOT USE- crumpled aluminum foil, rubber bands, string and yarn- these can be dangerous to your cat/kitten and could result in your kitten/cat needing surgery to remove a bowel obstruction

Avoid feather toys with the mylar (shiny foil) inserts. The mylar can cut the kittens mouth as they chew on it, much like a paper cut.

## BEDS AND SCRATCHING POSTS:

Your kitten has slept in a pet bed and enjoys that security. Just get something soft and cuddly that's fully machine washable and dryer safe. If you don't mind the kitten sleeping in a human bed this will probably be the sleeping place of choice at night.

**A SCRATCHING POST IS A MUST AND WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU GET THE HEAVIEST STURDIEST POST YOU CAN AFFORD. YOUR KITTEN HAS GROWN UP WITH A SCRATCHING POST AND IF YOU CONTINUE OUR METHOD FOR DISCIPLINE DURING THE SETTLING IN PERIOD YOUR FURNITURE SHOULD BE UNBLEMISHED.** These kittens have been reared with a cat tree with 2 textures- carpeting and sisal rope or sisal industrial carpet. The cat tree is an important item for your kitten and an important investment for your home. Please do not purchase a tall cat tree that fastens to the ceiling like the old pole lamps. They are not sturdy enough and a kitten can be toppled off and seriously injure themselves. With cat trees it's much more important that they be **heavy rather than high**. If a cat or kitten can move the tree they won't use it. If you have carpeted floors, get a different texture carpet on the cat tree. They're smart but not smart enough to differentiate that it's OK to scratch on the cat tree but not OK to scratch on the carpet if it's the same texture carpeting.