



Setting Your New Cat Up for Success

Congratulations on adopting your new cat!

To ease the transition into their new home, consider the following:

Time for Adjustment

Welcoming a new cat into your family is an exciting milestone, so it's tempting to want to show them off to the world. Every cat is different, but it generally takes a few weeks to a few months for them to decompress from their time in the shelter, acclimate to their new surroundings and establish a routine. Routine is very important for cats—establish a predictable routine, including play time with a wand or other interactive toy just before mealtimes.

Introducing Your New Pet

Take your time introducing your new cat to other people and pets in your home. Allow them to acclimate at their own pace. Supervise all interactions until everyone is comfortable. Adult cats may take weeks to months to get comfortable with other pets in the home. Having a safe space to retreat is important.

Creating a Safe Space

Walk through your home and pick up any items that might be harmful to your pet. Are there hair ties, ribbons and/or plastic bags your cat could accidentally ingest? Are there wires your new cat could chew? Are there any plants that are toxic to pets?

Start your new cat in a small space like a bathroom where they can't hide under a bed or underneath furniture. Provide a litter box, food, water, a bed in a box and some toys in this space. You can visit them there as often as you like but keep all other pets out until you're ready to introduce them. Slowly expand their territory as they become more comfortable.

Over time, gradually introduce your new cat to the rest of your home, allowing them to explore and adjust at their own pace. Provide a high perch, if possible, where they can observe and adjust while feeling secure. Observe their behavior and comfort level and provide positive reinforcement and rewards when they show confidence in new areas. You can learn about plants that may be toxic to pets and find resources for creating a safe space by visiting the QR code on the reverse side.

Caring for Your Cat's Nails

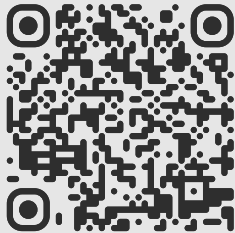
Cats must keep their nails. To help maintain proper nail care, provide multiple outlets for them to scratch. Observe the cat to determine the type of scratching post they prefer. Not only does scratching file and condition their nails, but scratching is also a form of stress relief and stretching exercise for cats. Clipping their nails can help to reduce unwanted scratching. Use treats and a gradual process (just clip one or two nails at a time at first) to help them learn to be comfortable with having their nails trimmed.

Supplies & Tasks Checklist

Make sure you have the following essentials to make your cat feel right at home:

- Food and water bowls
- Food (We encourage a slow transition to a new diet.)
- Treats for training and enrichment
- Bedding
- Toys: Provide a wide range of materials to meet your cat's different needs, such as comfort, interaction (wand toys are great for this) and enrichment. Monitor for preference and safety.
- Litter box
- Collar and ID tags (Don't forget to complete their microchip and license registration!)
- Cardboard and sisal scratching posts
- Grooming supplies: brush, nail clippers, etc.
- Explore pet insurance options
- Establish veterinary care

It's important to find a veterinarian for your new pet ASAP to continue any necessary preventative care (e.g. vaccines, flea/tick prevention), review history and records and make a care plan for your new family member.



By establishing these essentials in a safe and loving environment, you're setting your new cat up for success for years to come. Practice patience and understanding with them and with yourself as you both adjust to life together.

For partner offers, resources, links and handouts on important health and behavior topics, visit the QR code or go to **[SeattleHumane.org/advice-for-adopters](https://seattlehumane.org/advice-for-adopters)**.

At Seattle Humane, we are committed to finding the right match for both you and our animals. However, we understand that despite the best efforts and intentions, a pet may not be the right fit for your home or lifestyle. We encourage you to rehome on your own if you are comfortable, but we welcome any adopted pet back at any point in their life.

Visit seattlehumane.org/pet-rehoming for tips on rehoming, or if you need to return the pet to our care, complete an Intake Form and our dedicated Intake team will assist you with the process. We do not accept walk-in surrenders—all surrenders are by appointment only. For after-hour emergency surrenders, please contact your local animal control agency.

