

New Cat Checklist

Cats settle best when they feel safe and in control. **Set up the home around the five needs below, with hiding and high places, and let your cat decide when to come to you.**

FILLABLE PDF – TYPE ON A COMPUTER OR TABLET, OR PRINT AND FILL IT IN BY HAND.

CAT'S NAME

VET PHONE

ARRIVAL DATE

THE FIVE NEEDS (AAFP/ISFM)

- A safe place** A private, raised hiding spot for each cat, with more than one way out.
- Separate resources** Food, water, litter, scratching, play and rest apart; **never food beside the litter box.**
- Play and hunting** Daily wand-toy play (string toys put away after) and food puzzles to work for food.
- Gentle people** Many cats prefer frequent, low-key contact; let the cat come to you.
- Familiar smells** Skip strong cleaners, leave shoes at the door, and let your cat's scent marks stay.

SHOPPING & SET-UP

- ☐ **Litter boxes:** cats + 1 (two for one cat), in different places
- ☐ **Scratchers:** a tall vertical post and a flat horizontal pad
- ☐ **A carrier** your cat can rest in, ready for the vet trip
- ☐ **Kitten-proofing:** string, rubber bands, cords, sharp things away

POISONOUS TO CATS

Lilies (emergency)

Even pollen or vase water can cause kidney failure.

Dog flea products

Permethrin flea products made for dogs can poison cats.

Human painkillers

One acetaminophen tablet can be fatal; avoid NSAIDs.

Essential oils

Concentrated essential oils are toxic to cats.

FIRST-WEEK LOG

DAY	EATING	LITTER BOX	HIDING / EXPLORING	NOTES

Call your vet if an adult cat hasn't eaten in 24 hours (a kitten under 6 weeks: 12 hours), strains in the box with little or no urine, or trembles after a flea product. Book a check-up soon after arrival; keep a new cat apart from resident cats until examined.

THE FULL VERSION: [NEW CAT OWNER GUIDE](#) • ON ETSY: [NEWDOGCO.ETSY.COM](#)

Sources: AAFP/ISFM environmental-needs and house-soiling guidelines; Cornell Feline Health Center; VCA Animal Hospitals (household hazards for cats; kitten checklist); ASPCA (lilies).