



Pet Knowledge

The more you know

Standard of Practice (but you will find your niche)

Raising Bottle Baby Kittens:

Raising bottle baby kittens can be a rewarding but challenging experience. These are kittens that have been separated from their mother and require round-the-clock care. Here are some essential tips and recommendations to help you successfully raise bottle baby kittens:

1. Age and Feeding Schedule:

- Kittens under 4 weeks old require bottle feeding every 2-3 hours, including overnight.
- Kittens between 4-8 weeks old can be fed every 4-6 hours.
- Use a specially designed kitten milk replacer formula, as cow's milk or human baby formula can cause digestive issues. Please look to buy KMR, and other specialized formulas for kittens.
- Kittens under 4 weeks will need a heating pad half under their carrier, because they do not produce their own body heat. Make sure to not overheat and that they can get away from the heat if they need.

2. Feeding Technique:

- Use a small, appropriately sized bottle with a soft nipple for easy feeding.
- Warm the formula to body temperature (around 100°F or 38°C) by placing the bottle in warm water.
- Make sure the kittens are warm before feeding as their bodies cannot process milk when they are cold.
- Hold the kitten in an upright position, similar to how they would nurse from their mother. NEVER FEED THEM ON THEIR BACK LIKE HUMAN BABY
- Allow the kitten to suckle at their own pace, avoiding force-feeding.

3. Stimulating Elimination:

- Kittens younger than 3 weeks cannot urinate or defecate on their own. After each feeding, use a warm, damp cloth or cotton ball to gently stimulate their genital area to encourage elimination.
- Rub the cloth or cotton ball in a circular motion until the kitten eliminates waste.

4. Proper Hygiene:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling the kittens to prevent the spread of germs.
- Clean and sanitize all feeding equipment, such as bottles and nipples, after each use in boiling water or with a boil bag for the microwave.
- Ensure the kittens' bedding is clean, dry, and changed regularly to prevent infections.

5. Socialization and Stimulation:

- Provide a warm and quiet environment for the kittens to feel secure.
- Handle the kittens gently and frequently to help them become accustomed to human touch.
- Introduce age-appropriate toys and objects for them to explore and play with.
- Gradually expose them to various sights, sounds, and experiences to promote socialization.

6. Veterinary Care:

- Schedule a veterinary appointment as soon as possible to have the kittens examined and receive necessary vaccinations.
- Follow your veterinarian's recommendations for deworming and flea prevention.
- Seek veterinary advice if the kittens show any signs of illness, such as diarrhea, vomiting, or lethargy.

7. Weaning Process:

- Around 4-5 weeks old, gradually introduce wet kitten food mixed with formula to encourage weaning.
- Offer the mixture on a shallow plate or saucer and allow the kittens to explore and consume it at their own pace.
- Over time, reduce the amount of formula and increase the solid food until they are fully weaned.

8. Adoption or Placement:

- Once the kittens are weaned, healthy, and at an appropriate age (8-10 weeks), consider finding them suitable forever homes or placing them with reputable rescue organizations.

Remember, raising bottle baby kittens requires dedication, patience, and around-the-clock care. If you have any concerns or questions, consult with a veterinarian or seek advice from experienced individuals or organizations specializing in kitten care.

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-Merced TNR