

Kitten Adoption: What To Know

1. The Financial Commitment

Adoption fees are just the starting point. A kitten's first year is typically the most expensive due to a series of necessary medical "start-up" costs.

- **Veterinary Care:** Kittens require a series of vaccinations (FVRCP, Rabies), deworming, and a feline leukemia/FIV test.
- **Spaying/Neutering:** If not already done by the shelter, this is a vital one-time expense for health and behavior.
- **The Monthly "Burn":** Budget for high-quality kitten food, litter, and preventative flea/tick/heartworm medication.

2. Kitten-Proofing Your Space

Kittens are essentially tiny, furry toddlers with the climbing ability of a mountain goat. Before they arrive, perform a "floor-level" sweep:

- **Tuck Away Cords:** Exposed electrical cords are tempting chew toys. Use cord protectors or tuck them behind furniture.
- **Check Your Plants:** Many common houseplants (like Lilies, Aloe, and Poinsettias) are toxic to cats.
- **Small Objects:** Anything that can fit in a kitten's mouth is a potential choking hazard or intestinal blockage risk.

3. Socialization and Time

Kittens are not "low maintenance" compared to adult cats. They require active engagement to grow into well-adjusted adults.

- **The "Single Kitten Syndrome":** Kittens learn boundaries (like not biting too hard) by playing with other kittens. If you are adopting a single kitten, you will need to step in as the primary playmate to burn off their "zoomie" energy.
- **Sleep Patterns:** Kittens are often most active at dawn and dusk. Be prepared for some early morning wake-up calls during the first few months.

4. Necessary Gear

Have your "starter kit" ready before the kitten steps through the door:

- **Litter Box:** One with low sides so a small kitten can easily climb in and out.

- **Scratching Posts:** If you don't provide a designated place to scratch, they will choose your sofa.
- **Vertical Space:** Cats feel safest when they can get high up. A small cat tree or a cleared shelf goes a long way.