

Kitten Behavior

You and your new kitten can look forward to hours of play and fun. But there are a few things about kitten behavior that will be helpful for you to know in order to enjoy your pet to the fullest.

Using a litter pan is largely a process of instinct in a cat; however, young kittens sometimes need to have litter pan behavior reinforced. A good rule of thumb concerning litter pans is that you have one litter pan for each cat. If you are using clay litter, the pan should be totally changed every 5-7 days and scooped every day. The most common behavioral reason for soiling outside the litter pan is that the pan is too dirty for that particular cat.

Often a young kitten is overwhelmed by a sizeable house and lots of stairs. For the first week or two, consider confining your kitten to a room with a litter pan, food and water during the night and when you are away. This is especially helpful if your kitten is less than 8 weeks old.

Cats, throughout their kitten-hood, have lots and lots of energy. Much of that energy is channeled into play-hunting behavior. Kittens are drawn to things that move. If you have a kitten that is alone all day, then you can expect to become the object of this behavior. You can divert the kitten's attention by throwing wads of paper across the room. You can also use a laser pointer. Be sure not to shine it in any creature's eyes though.

To deter your kitten from certain actions, you can use a squirt of water or a can of pennies tossed near the kitten. Use plastic cord covers if electrical and phone cords are tempting your kitten to chew on them. If your kitten is getting into your potted plants, you can cover the soil with decorative bark, or rock, or simply cover the pot with aluminum foil. To keep kittens and cats from getting into certain areas, create lightweight booby traps out of plastic bowls or empty soda cans when disturbed. Arrange these so they won't hurt your kitty when they fall. The loud noise and sudden collapse can provide an excellent deterrent to repeat attempts. Please do not allow your cat or kitten to play with yarn or string. If they swallow it, terrible problems can result, often requiring surgery. It can be fatal.

If you are considering de-clawing your kitten, be sure it is for appropriate reasons. The destruction wrought by territorial clawing on the side of sofas and edges of rugs is the conventional reason to de-claw a cat. Kitten behaviors such as play-hunting and climbing up your leg are transient and will not be a problem after 6-8 months.

Remember that a kitten that is not playful and getting into trouble may be sick. Your kitten should play hard and sleep hard. Enjoy kitten-hood. It goes by very fast and the next thing you know you'll have a sedate, well-mannered adult cat, and you'll wonder where the impish kitten went.

SYMPTOMS OF A SICK CAT

If your cat shows any of the following symptoms do not hesitate to call us.

- Weight loss
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Decrease in appetite
- Red, watery eyes, sneezing, nasal discharge
- Listlessness
- Straining with urination or bowel movements; frequent attempts to urinate, bloody urine or changes in litter box habits
- Dull hair coat

CAT PROOFING YOUR HOUSE

The following items are potentially fatal to your cat:

- Anti-freeze
- Cleaning Supplies
- Rat killer/bait and other poisons
- Poisonous plants - All Lilies, Dieffenbachia (Dumb Cane), Poinsettia, Amaryllis, English Ivy, Philodendron
- Aspirin - unless under the direct supervision of your veterinarian
- Tylenol
- Strings, yarn, coins, rubber bands, balloons
- Electrical cords

CLINIC HOURS

Monday-Tuesday 8:00 AM - 7:00PM
Wednesday-Friday 8:00 AM - 5:30 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00PM

Phone: (816) 361-4888

**FULL SERVICE HOSPITAL FACILITY
DENTAL CARE * BOARDING**

If you need **EMERGENCY CARE** after hours, we recommend the Veterinary Specialty and Emergency Center located at 11950 W. 110th Street, Suite B (110th & Quivira across the street from the MacDonald's) (913-649-6850), or Mission MedVet, 5914 Johnson Drive (at Johnson Drive and Woodson) (913-722-5566). Both have doctors and staff there to handle any emergencies while we are closed.

KITTEN BEHAVIOR

**Eliza K. Sundahl, DVM, CVA
Diplomate ABVP (Feline Practice)
and associates**



**7107 Main Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64114
(816) 361-4888
www.kccatclinic.com**

Members
American Assn. of Feline Practitioners