

Bengal Kitten Care Guide



For New Owners

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THINGS YOU'LL NEED FOR YOUR KITTEN

You'll need to have the following items on hand before bringing your new kitten home from us:

1. A litter box that is the right size for the age of the kitten. A low, open pan style box is best for a young kitten for ease of climbing in and out.
2. Cat litter. Your kitten has been using pine pellets natural litter. This is the safest litter for a kitten (and cat for that matter). We will send a 40 lb bag of this product home with you for transition. It can be purchased at all animal feed stores (we buy ours at the Otter Co-op Feed Store) and in some major pet stores. Feel free to transition your kitten over time to a litter that you prefer if you choose to. You might be surprised at how picky some kittens can be. Some kittens prefer the very finely grained litter, and some prefer the coarser types. Don't give up if your kitten does not seem pleased at first...they will definitely let you know when you have hit upon the right mixture. We will also send your kitten home with a sample of a product called "Cat Attract" cat litter. This may be used to help lure a wayward kitten to the litter box by sprinkling a little bit of the product over the top of the pine pellets.
3. Scratching posts and cat trees are invaluable in the training your kitten to avoid harming your furniture. Scratching their claws is a healthy, natural instinct for a kitten and cat, and providing them with the right place to scratch will keep you both happy. A variety of cat trees and scratching posts can be found in most major pet stores. Your kitten has been used to the sisal rope posts and loves to climb a high multi-level tree! We encourage you to visit <http://www.peaceofmindpetproducts.ca/> for all your cat tree/post needs. The owner, Scott, is very helpful in choosing the right tree or post for your needs and he delivers too! We will be sending home a basic cat scratching post with your kitten made by Scott.
4. Grooming tools such as a flea comb or special brush for short-haired cats. You'll also need clippers for their nails. You can find clippers made especially for cats, at most major pet stores. Trimming the kitten's nails should be done regularly to avoid unplanned injury to himself or his people during play and climbing. The more often you handle your kitten and his paws, the easier it will be to trim his nails.
5. Food and water dishes. Believe it or not, there is a difference even in the type of food and water bowls you provide for your kitten!! Certain types of plastic, wood, and even some types of ceramic bowls may contain tiny cracks that can harbour potentially harmful bacteria. Most professionals recommend using glass and stainless steel food and water bowls, and cleaning them regularly in the dish washer. Bengal kittens in particular LOVE to splash around in their water bowl, so the bigger the better, and depending on your floor type, you might consider putting a rubber mat beneath the bowl to catch the splashes!
6. Feliway Comfort Zone plug-ins for cats. These plug-ins provide continuous feline pheromones in the air, which are very soothing and comforting to kittens, and are odourless to people. If

you sense any stress at all in your kitten when you bring him home, get one for every room. These will make a huge difference in keeping your household environment calm for your bengal kitten.

7. Toys!! Bengal kittens love to play. It's their survival instinct and throughout their lives, kittens and cats emulate hunting in their play. Providing them with suitable toys helps to ensure they fulfill this need. You will need to be very selective in the type of toys you choose as kittens love to chew, and you need to be careful to avoid toys with small strings or beads that can be swallowed and stuck in the kitten's throat or intestinal tract. Toys don't have to be expensive...our baby bengals love cardboard boxes and paper bags to jump in and out of. Plastic straws and the plastic rings from orange juice cartons are other favorites.
8. Pet carrier. You'll need to have a carrier for the safety of traveling with your kitten, and for trips to the vet. The carrier should be large enough for the kitten to stand up in and turn around, and do remember that your kitten will not be little for long!! Choose a sturdy carrier with plenty of ventilation that will still allow your kitten to stand up and turn around in when he is fully grown. We like the carriers that allow you to open them from the top as they are very convenient for removal of the kitten.
9. High quality food. We will send you home with some of the food your bengal kitten has been eating so that the transition goes more smoothly. Changes in diet and water, even litter and environment can cause minor diarrhea and other problems. We feed high quality canned kitten food and introduce the kittens to mom's raw diet as well so that they are eating the most nutritious food possible as they develop and before they go home to you. If you are interested in continuing to feed your bengal a raw diet when you take him home, we are happy to give you our recipe. When feeding a raw diet it's very important to follow a strict recipe that includes all of the ingredients essential to your kitten's health – especially in the case of bengals. They need extra taurine in their diet, for instance. In any case, if you choose to feed raw, we are happy to send you home with a sample as well as our recipe. * You will need to purchase a good meat grinder in order to prepare the raw diet – we use a higher end Cuisinart brand that we purchased at Canadian Tire for \$150. It works very well for us. Don't worry if you're not prepared to feed your kitten a raw diet – he has been used to quality canned kitten food as well, so you are fine to feed canned exclusively. A wet diet rather than dry kibble is the best choice.
10. Cat bed. A nice cozy bed is a great idea for the new member of the family. Your kitten will soon know that this is his special place. Choose a bed that is well constructed and machine washable.
11. Leash and Harness for outdoor walks. We have had included a custom made harness with your new kitten so all you need to supply is a sturdy leash. We find the retractable dog leashes work best as they allow more freedom of movement for exploring the outdoors and can be pulled in shorter when more control is needed or for training purposes.

12. Cat Wheel! Consider purchasing a cat wheel for your bengal kitten. Bengals have more energy to burn than you can imagine and a wheel in your home will promote proper daily exercise and ensure that behavioural issues resulting from boredom and pent up energy will not develop. I would send one of these Ferris cat Wheels home with each kitten in their Kitten Pack if it were feasible!!!

<http://www.ziggydoo.com/en/jewelspride-bengals/24-ferris-cat-exercise-wheel.html>

WELCOME HOME KITTEN!

Your bengal kitten will be ready to bring home at approximately 12-14 weeks of age (one week after his final vaccination and neuter/spay). This allows us to monitor the kitten and ensure he is doing well before leaving for his new home. Please ensure you have a few days free to stay at home with your new kitten and help him to settle in before you leave him/her alone.

QUARANTINE

We recommend that you quarantine your kitten from other people and pets in your home for a few days at least (a week or two is optimum if you can do it). If there are no other pets in your home, just a few days will be fine.

Restriction to a small space like a washroom or spare bedroom, along with his food, water, litter pan, and bed is best. This will allow him to relax and learn where he should go to the bathroom and find his food. Your home is new to him and probably a large place where he can easily get lost. If he is unable to find his litterbox or bed, he may begin using the most convenient places he can find.

VETERINARY CARE AND GROOMING

Within the first 72 hours we highly recommend that you take your kitten to your own vet so that he or she can confirm his good health and book future visits. For your records and if you are in need of any additional health information regarding your kitten, please feel free to contact our vet:

Aldor Veterinary Clinic -Dr. Christiane Pfaender
21773 Smith Crescent
Milner (Langley), B.C. VOX 1T0

Tel: (604) 530-0704

Fax: (604) 530-0860

Email: aldorvet@shaw.ca

As outlined in your kitten's vet record book, your kitten has been dewormed with Strongid-T, Panacur and Baycox before coming to you. Please consult with your vet for further courses of treatment.

Your kitten has been treated with Advantage Multi the week of pick-up. Please consult with your vet for future courses of treatment.

We have trimmed his nails. Bengal kittens are short haired and typically do not require bathing except in certain cases such as preparing for shows, etc. Nail trimming can be continued on a

regular routine – the more used to it your kitten is, the easier it will be to continue doing this into adulthood. A good tip we've learned is to hold and stroke your kitten's feet and pads when you are handling him – this gets him used to having his feet handled and makes nail trimming a much easier task!

HEALTH & VACCINATION PLAN FOR KITTENS

The following is the vaccination schedule suggested by our veterinarian. Feel free to share this with your veterinarian so you can come up with a plan that you feel confident in.

(8 & 12 WEEKS) (Done prior to kitten leaving our cattery)

- Full veterinary examination of kitten and external check for parasites
- Feline rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia vaccine #1 & #2 (we use a modified live three-way vaccine). Check with your vet about the pros and cons of the chlamydia, the FeLV, and the FIP vaccines, which we do not recommend for indoor-only kittens.
- deworming and preventative flea treatment

(16 WEEKS) (In your care)

- Feline rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia vaccine #3 (again we recommend using a modified live three-way vaccine). Next vaccination is due in 1 year; vaccinate every 3 years thereafter. Rabies vaccination (it is often suggested that the rabies vaccine be given separately from other vaccinations to lessen the chances of a vaccine reaction in the kitten)
- Feline leukemia vaccine #1 (optional; we recommend not giving this vaccine for indoor only cats)

POTENTIAL HOUSEHOLD DANGERS

Beware of some of the simple, everyday things currently taken for granted, yet when introducing a curious new kitten to the household, could spell disaster. Be sure to keep all sharp objects such as utensils, knives, razors, etc. safely in drawers or holders so they won't get stepped on or chewed. Watch out for an unattended stove element – bengals LOVE to be up on the counters and will accidentally stroll across a hot stove without knowing the danger until it's too late. Remember that kittens and cats are attracted to warm areas, and washers and dryers are notorious temptations for furry warm sleeping bodies!! Toilet lids should always be kept down to avoid a kitten falling in and drowning. Watch out for rocking chairs and recliners, which can trap a kitten if you don't know they are underfoot. Household cleaners are poisonous to cats, and antifreeze in particular should be kept in a secured cabinet out of harm's (and kitty's) way.

Speaking of poison, cats naturally like to supplement their meat-eating diet with greens, and indoor cats will usually go after any houseplants that may be about. Be aware that many houseplants are poisonous to cats! We add supplements to our bengals' food to give them the needed nutrients from plants (nutrients that, in the wild, the cat would get from the digestive tracts of their prey). You can also grow catnip and fresh grass indoors for your feline's vegetarian cravings. It's best not to keep real houseplants indoors when you have young kittens as it is unrealistic not to expect that they may want to chew on the plants themselves which may be poisonous, and/or play in the dirt.

Electrical cords are highly dangerous to kittens, yet seem to always attract them for nibbling and teething, which can cause electrocution. When purchasing new appliances such as vacuum cleaners, look for those that have cord retractors, and conceal all wires or encase them in special tubing available from computer and auto supply stores. Even wrapping exposed cords several times with heavy ply plastic tape is better than doing nothing.

If you live in an upstairs apartment, or your home has more than one story, always be careful of open windows...even if they have screens, cats and kittens are surprisingly strong and may push the screen out and fall out of the window. This goes for patios on high rise apartments, etc. A bengal will leap over the edge to chase a bird or any other object they see flying by.

SPENDING TIME WITH YOUR KITTEN

If you're concerned that you won't be able to spend as much time with your kitten as you would like, consider purchasing/adopting another pet!! Cats (and ESPECIALLY active breeds such as bengals) are extremely social animals, and they need the stimulation and interaction with other felines and with their human family to feel secure, happy and loved. Be sure that you really do have the time available and are willing to commit to spending it with your new feline family member before actually bringing him or her home. Also, for younger adults hoping to add the companionship of a kitten to their lives, it is important to remember that a significant amount of people are allergic to cats, and that lifestyle changes and household moves can be very stressful for felines. Have a back-up plan in mind for what you will do if you suddenly find yourself in a new relationship with someone who doesn't get along with your kitty (or is allergic to them), and if a new job or career will bring frequent changes and moves into your life. Please refer to our sales contract for more information on the lifetime commitment you have agreed to.

EXISTING PETS

When you introduce your bengal kitten to other pets in your household, beware that your existing pets may not take well to the new kitten at first. This could be very scary for the kitten and stressful for the existing pet. These encounters should NEVER be unsupervised. At first focus on making your existing pet comfortable by praising and petting him while the new kitten explores the room. Showing favouritism to the kitten and scolding the existing pet will cause

friction and animosity from the outset. Teach the existing pet to observe the new kitten and play nicely with him when he approaches. Keeping the environment calm and quiet during introductions is very helpful as well. Keep loud children or adults away and introduce pets one at a time if possible to avoid unnecessary stress on all concerned.

 **ENJOY YOUR NEW FAMILY MEMBER!** 

We hope you found this guide helpful and we are happy to answer any additional questions you may have. Please contact us any time at all – we look forward to photos, updates, and stories of your adventures with your new Jewelspride kitten, so call, write, text or email whenever you like!

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