

# You May Be The Perfect Cat Owner If You...

- Believe caring for a pet for 15 years does not seem like a lifetime
- Look forward to having your ankles rubbed dry by an affectionate, hairy animal
- Don't mind sharing your house with someone who sheds, tracks kitty litter, and throws up hairballs
- Don't mind sharing your house with someone who will never clean up after themselves
- Love a housemate who will randomly and regularly entertain you with outrageous and silly antics (at their whim, not yours)
- Want to take care of someone every day
- Like your lap warmed whenever you sit down
- Would like to spend your extra money on pet food, toys, veterinary care, kitty litter; and more kitty litter
- Want to be welcomed with a soft purr of appreciation
- Believe that spaying and neutering pets will help solve the pet overpopulation problem
- Can't imagine leaving your devoted pet behind when you move
- Want to keep an ID tag on your pets, so they can get back to you no matter what
- Enjoy unconditional love and constant companionship
- Believe that keeping your cat indoors is for your pet's well being

If you think you've got what it takes, visit your local animal shelter to find the perfect cat or kitten!

## Choosing A Cat Companion

If you're ready to care for a cat (or two) for the next 12 or so years, here are some things to consider before choosing your new feline friend.

### Your Lifestyle.

- If you work
- If you have children
- If you have other animals
- The size of your living space

### The Cat's Age.

- Adult cats are better suited to the rough handling of inquisitive toddlers
- Kittens also need to be house-trained, but they adapt quickly to new surroundings
- Adult cats need less supervision for those who work

## Health.

- Healthy cats have clear, bright eyes, pink gums, a clean nose and ears, and a smooth, shiny coat
- Small black specks on the fur indicate fleas
- Check the litter box to make sure the fecal matter is formed, not runny

## Personality.

- Look for a feline who's easy-going and responds to you
- Kittens should be active, outgoing, and willing to be handled
- A feline who shies away from you might be more suited to a quiet household
- Adult cats should be fairly relaxed when handled

## Length Of Fur.

- Decide if you want long, medium, or short-haired cats
- A long coat will require some combing on your part to fight matting

Regardless of the age or the sex (both male and female cats are equally affectionate) of the cat you choose, keep your cat indoors, and you'll likely have a loving companion for the next 12 to 18 years.

# Kitten-proofing Your House

Curious kittens are capable of leaping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest of spaces. To protect your kitten in her new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, kitten-proof your house.

## Kitchens/Bathrooms

- Use childproof latches to keep little paws from prying open cabinets
- Place medications, cleaners, chemicals, and laundry supplies on high shelves
- Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet
- Kittens can climb into small spaces. Check for and block any small spaces, nooks, or holes inside cabinetry or behind washer/dryer units
- Make sure they haven't jumped into the dryer before you turn it on
- Keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn't harmful, the wrapper could be)
- Keep the toilet lid closed to prevent drowning or drinking harmful cleaning chemicals

## Living/Family Room

- Place dangling wires from lamps, VCRs, televisions, stereos, and phones out of reach
- Put away children's toys and games
- Put away knick-knacks until your kitten has the coordination not to knock them over
- Check all those places where your vacuum cleaner doesn't fit, but your kitten does, for dangerous items, like string
- Move common house plants which can be poisonous out of reach, including hanging plants that can be jumped onto from other nearby surfaces
- Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover
- Put away all sewing and craft notions, especially thread

## Garage

- Move all chemicals to high shelves or behind secure doors
- Clean up all antifreeze from the floor and driveway, as one taste can be lethal to all animals
- Bang on your car hood to ensure that your kitten (or any neighbor cats) has not hidden in the engine for warmth
- Keep all sharp objects and tools out of reach

## Bedrooms

- Keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors (drawstrings and buttons can cause major problems if swallowed)
- Keep any medications, lotions, or cosmetics off accessible surfaces (like the bedside table)
- Move electrical and phone wires out of reach of chewing
- Be careful that you don't close your kitten in closets or dresser drawers
- And look out for paws, noses, and tails when you shut doors behind you or scoot chairs.