

CAT COMPANION BOOKLET

Thank you for adopting a companion cat from the Jackson County Animal Shelter.

The Shelter staff and Friends of the Animal Shelter volunteers hope this handout will answer many of the questions you may have.

Please feel free to contact us with any concerns or questions



5595 S. Pacific Hwy 99
Phoenix, Oregon 97535

www.jacksoncounty.org/shelter

For inquiries about animals:
(541) 774-6654

To view adoptable pets, go to
www.petfinder.com

PO Box 1013
Phoenix, Oregon 97535

www.fotas.org

LIKE US: www.facebook.com/fotas

For opportunities to volunteer or donate:
(541) 774-6651 • fotasjc@gmail.com

Friends of the Animal Shelter volunteer resources:

- Adoption Ambassador: _____
- Rabbitt (Jane Babbitt) 📞 (541) 488-0577 📧 rab@mind.net
- Marilyn Edwards 📞 (541) 482-7005 📧 marilynjeanne.edwards@gmail.com

The suggestions in his booklet are guidelines only, and are revised from the Oregon Humane Society Cat Adoption Booklet and other resources. To see the Oregon Humane Society version, go to www.oregonhumane.org, click on "How to Adopt" and follow to the Cat Adoption booklet. While you are there, peruse their site; it's a fabulous organization! There are several other reputable web sites including the ones from the veterinary schools of Tufts and Cornell Universities.

For more specific help, FOTAS recommends that you contact an animal behavior specialist or your veterinarian.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

OUR MOST IMPORTANT ADVICE:

PLEASE ALLOW YOUR CAT TIME TO SETTLE INTO HIS/HER NEW HOME!

Have a safe room with all supplies and a door that you can shut. Please read all of Chapter 1.

The Ride Home

- Keep your new cat in his carrier no matter how much he is crying – it is the **ONLY** safe way to transport your pet. Have an adult carry the cat in its carrier to your vehicle to eliminate “swinging” of the carrier.
- Use a seat belt or tether to secure the carrier in your car.
- Do not allow children to tease or excite the cat. Have them keep their hands and fingers to themselves! Never allow them to open the carrier to pet the cat.
- Do not leave the cat in the car unattended, even for a short stop to shop. Cats can over-heat very quickly.
- Buy your supplies ahead of time and then you can take your kitty straight home.
- Keep the cat in the carrier until you are safely inside your home (or the cat’s safe room, if there are other pets in the home) with the doors shut. Once home, the cat will need time and a quiet place to settle.



Settling In: Protocol for You and Your New Cat, Weeks 1 and 2

Before you bring your new cat or kitten home, it is important to “kitty proof” (for his safety, as well as that of your belongings) and to purchase a few basic supplies. Here is a quick check list to get you started:

- **Prepare a safe room**, such as a bathroom or small spare bedroom, for your new cat’s first few nights. The safe room affords them a small space to get used to being in a different environment. Visit them there quietly and often. Bring a treat (food) and a toy, so that they start associating you with food and fun. Sit down, on the floor, if possible, and let the cat come to you. In just a short time, the cat will start showing you they are getting more comfortable.
- **It is not uncommon for cats to hide at first.** Allow this as long as they are eating, drinking and using their litter box. Often, they will emerge at night when the household is quiet. Keep the door to their safe room closed until they are confidently moving around the room.
- **Remember, cats are routine-oriented** and they are getting re-established in their new home. Please, be patient! If you have questions, please call one of the FOTAS volunteers listed on the front of this booklet. We are always will to provide additional support.
- **Place the litter box at one end of the room with the food and water dishes and bed at the other.** Allow your cat lots of time to adjust, and initially, when you’re away and at night, keep the cat in this safe place. (If it is your bathroom, remember to close the toilet lid!)

Have the following supplies to have on hand. You can find most of these at these at pet supply store or super market:

- ❑ **Litter Box and Litter** – You will want to experiment to find the litter your cat prefers. There are many different kinds of litter to choose from, but in studies most cats prefer non-scented fine clumping litter. Purchase a litter box and litter, even if your cat will be an indoor/outdoor cat eventually. You'll be keeping your new cat inside for the first few weeks!
- ❑ **Food** – We suggest high-quality dry (majority of diet) and wet food (supplemental). Avoid food with dyes. Cat food free of dyes will usually be clearly labeled. (See *Feeding* on page 5.)
- ❑ **Food and Water Dishes** – Avoid plastic dishes; they harbor bacteria and can cause allergic reactions and “kitty acne”, which turns their lips black. Who knew? We recommend you use ceramic or stainless steel. Wash all dishes once a day. Make sure food and water dishes are NOT placed near the litter box.
- ❑ **Safety Collar and ID Tag** – We suggest all elastic or breakaway collars. Even indoor-only kitties need to wear a collar and ID tag, in case they “escape”.
- ❑ **Nail Clippers and Other Grooming Supplies** - A flea comb and a brush are needed to keep your kitty beautiful. Hairball medication might be handy if your cat has medium to long hair.
- ❑ **Safe Toys** – Cats love to chase and hunt down toys. Avoid those with small parts that can break off and be ingested. Also avoid yarn, string and curling ribbon, as these will cause problems inside your cat's digestive tract if swallowed.
- ❑ **Scratching Posts and Boxes** – See *Scratching* in Chapter 3.

The First Days

- Your new cat is embarking on a journey to a fun and wonderful life. You are aware of all the joys that lie ahead, but your cat does not know what is happening. The first few days can be very uncertain for your cat. Be patient and take things slowly.
- Please review the information provided to you by the Jackson County Animal Shelter, paying particular attention to any information given by the previous owner of your new cat. Schedule the complimentary first veterinary examination within 5 days of adoption and begin integrating your new kitty into your household.
- A frightened or unsure cat's tendency is to hide. Let them.



Provide Your Cat a Safe Place

- At first, keep your cat in a small room, such as the bathroom (toilet lid down!), with the litter box at one end of the room and food and water and a bed at the other, to give him time to adjust.
- Gradually give your pet more freedom as he successfully goes back to and uses his litter box. This adjustment period may last several weeks.
- Keep your cat indoors. Check for open windows and loose screens, as a frightened cat could easily break out. It can take weeks or even months for your new cat to feel at home.
- Never drag your new cat out of hiding. Use a lure, such as smelly food or a toy.
- Provide plenty of fresh water and high quality food.

- Initially, keep your new cat separated from other pets. (See Chapter 5, **Introducing Your Cat to Other Pets**). It is best not to introduce your kitten/cat to your home during very busy times such as birthdays and holidays. If you do, provide them with a quiet area away from the action and limit over-handling of the new cat.
- Cats get bored, so provide lots of fun toys, perches and social interactions with you to help your cat adjust. If you have a windowsill with a view of the yard, open the curtain or blinds so your cat can get a view of the world outside.
- Many plants are poisonous to animals, so do a thorough check of your home before bringing home your new cat. Here is a list of some of the most common household plants that are toxic: Amaryllis, Azalea, Baby's Breath, Bird of Paradise, Calla Lily, Cyclamen, Daffodil, Dieffenbachia, Easter Lily, Eucalyptus, Mistletoe, Narcissus, Oleander, Peace Lily, Primrose, Philodendron, Tiger Lily, and Tomato plants.
- Help reduce potential human allergies by getting a HEPA air cleaner and vacuuming frequently.
- Remember, cats are naturally curious, like to explore, and can get on top of most anything. It is a good idea to put away breakables that may be knocked off a shelf by an exploring kitty. It's as easy as closing a door to a room.



Feeding

- Place the cat's food and water dishes in a safe, quiet place, where she can eat without being disturbed by other pets, children or loud noises, such as the laundry and slamming doors. Cats like routine, and you will figure out what works best for your pet and you.
- The feeding place should be far from the litter box (which should have its own calm and quiet location). Feed good quality food that is free of dyes, high in nutrients and low in magnesium ash (which may contribute to urinary disorders).
- Dry food helps to clean teeth and, if nutritionally complete, can be the bulk of the kitten's diet.
- For kittens, dry food can be left out for the day so it can eat when hungry.
- Supplement with wet food, which contains a large percentage of water and is a good source of protein. Do NOT leave wet food out, as it will spoil and could make your cat sick. You can also add a little warm water to wet food to make it "soupy" – this gives the cat additional hydration.
- Limit "moist meal" (wet treats) or fish.
- Do not give cow's milk, as it can cause diarrhea.
- Clean food and water dishes thoroughly every day. Even if they look clean, they can become sticky with kitty saliva.

Adult cats (over 1 year):

- Feed high quality adult maintenance dry food, and supplement with wet food.
- Feed two scheduled meals per day. Free feeding of high quality dry food may work but can lead to obesity in some cats.
- Discard any food left after 24 hours before cleaning and refilling the dish. Follow amount guidelines on the pet food bag. Monitor your cat's weight and adjust food portions accordingly.
- If you cannot feel his ribs, he may be overweight, a condition that can lead to serious health problems. Check into pet food brands that have a low-cal option.
- See *Kitten Care 101* for instructions on feeding kittens.

Chapter 2 – Kitten Care 101

Congratulations on the adoption of your new kitten(s). Because you chose to adopt your kitten(s) from the Jackson County Animal Shelter, they will already be spayed or neutered, treated for parasites, tested for FIV and Feline Leukemia, and given vaccinations. They are also entitled to a free wellness exam by a veterinarian.

Basic Supplies

Kitten food (softer than dry cat food), wet food, small water and food dishes (ceramic, glass or stainless steel), litter box and litter, bedding, scratching post, toys (wand toys are fun), brush, and if you can afford it, a cat tree.

Preparing Your Home

Do not let the kitten out of its carrier on the ride home. Make a “safe” room in your home, either a small bathroom or bedroom, with litter box, food, water and a bed. Place food and litter as far apart as possible. Let the kitten out of its carrier into this space. Do not let it out into the rest of your home right away as it should have time to adjust to its new surroundings. If shy, it is wise to let the kitten stay in this space until it gains confidence. You can come in to visit, play and reassure, but give your kitty time. If there are other pets in the home, again, the process is gradual.

DO NOT ALLOW YOUR KITTEN TO GO OUTSIDE! We actually suggest waiting a year, as young cats are vulnerable. Even better, always keep your cats inside. This ensures safety, particularly when it comes to vehicles or predators.

Limit access to decks and balconies. Also shut the toilet lids, and cover or wrap electrical wires. Make sure the kitten cannot access pesticides or household poisonous substances.

Kittens Need to Play

Do take the time to engage and play with your kitten...this helps in her socialization and need for “hunting”. Plus it’s fun for YOU. Wand toys, fur mice, cat nip pillows and ping pong balls are all entertaining.

Avoid toys with small pieces; bells, buttons, etc., which she could ingest. Yarn or string can also be swallowed. These are major choking hazards, and by the time you realize they’ve swallowed something, it may be too late.

Children & Cats

Young children should be supervised. Kittens are delicate and can be injured if dropped or squeezed too hard. Do not let your child chase the kitten, but instead have gentle sessions together. Remember too, a frightened kitten could scratch or bite your child. Slow and easy is the best policy. If the kitten is resting, let it be, they need a lot of sleep in their growing process.

Friends of the Animal Shelter volunteers and the staff at Jackson County Animal Shelter wish you and your new friend(s) many happy years together.



Chapter 3 – Cat Behavior

Cats need to scratch, play, hunt, hide, sleep and have social interaction. Cats are, by nature, curious and adventuresome. They can get into places you would not imagine and make toys out of the least likely items. Many cat behaviors are similar to those you would observe in wild felines (lions, tigers, cougars). They sleep, hunt, stalk, chase, scratch, bite and watch.

Scratching

- Scratching is a normal behavior and can be directed to appropriate places. Your cat scratches not only to clean away scales from its nails, but also to mark territory.
- Try providing your cat with a variety of scratching options such as a rope scratching post, a log with the bark intact, a cardboard box, etc.
- Put the scratching post near a favorite sleeping place, as cats love to stretch and scratch after a nap. Entice them with catnip!
- Reinforce his good behavior by praising him whenever he uses appropriate places. Put catnip on the “right” scratching item. If you catch him scratching the furniture, try a water spray bottle, set on stream. Sometimes leaving the water bottle near that furniture in sight will deter him.
- Only punish the behavior, not the cat (that is, catch him in the act). If the cat just loves scratching one corner of your couch, for example, place something there to block access like plastic carpet protectors turned upside down with the little spikes facing outward to discourage cats from walking over them.
- You can also use foil or double-sided sticky tape. Another option is pheromone spray that you can spritz on the furniture. This can be found at many vet offices.



Declawing

Once people learn more about declawing, they are usually discouraged from having the surgery and are happy to seek out alternative solutions. If the cat is already declawed, he/she should be kept indoors only.

Consider the following:

- Declawing is the amputation of the entire last digit of the cat’s toes. Declawing includes severing of ligaments and tendons, which is painful.
- Cat owners have reported having to change cat litter, as some declawed cats find clay litter painful and may stop covering their litter.
- Declawing also can cause impaired balance, increased stress because they cannot defend themselves, or injury during a fall because they cannot grip anything.
- It’s hardly surprising that, deprived of its claws, a cat may turn to its only other defense – its teeth. You may have a cat that does not damage your furniture, but is now quick to bite!
- Leave your cat with its claws and use the simple alternatives. Train your cat to use alternative scratching posts that you have provided.
- Keep claws trimmed – carefully trim the tips off the nails, being careful not to cut the quick (the vein that runs down the nails).
- Ask your veterinarian to instruct you, so you can do this at home, or take your pet to a groomer. There are also “mobile groomers” who will come to your home.

- You can buy nail sheaths, little plastic caps that fit over the nails to prevent scratching. These have been used successfully by many people.
- Declawing is illegal in several Western European countries and some American cities, including L.A. and San Francisco. Train your cat to use the alternative scratching posts that you provided.

Biting

- Some cats are gentle, while others are rowdy with nipping/biting. Choose a cat that will work well in your household. Biting, even while playing, is natural.
- You can avoid getting your hand bitten by not using your hand as a toy for your cat.
- Biting may also be saying that your cat has had enough petting or playing. So stop what you are doing and leave kitty alone.
- Stroking your cat near its tail and on the belly may also elicit biting behavior. Avoid petting in those areas, as biting is a natural reaction to that stimulation.
- You can retrain kitty by playing gently and using toys.

Playing

- Buy or make a few cat toys. Wand toys and laser lights are popular and promote good exercise. (Do not shine the laser light directly into the cat's eyes.)
- Playing and hunting desires can be closely related. A nice mouse toy can be used for a fun chase game, and allowing the cat to catch the toy mouse will help satisfy hunting desires.
- Most cats will play with anything that moves!
- When you play, be sure to avoid wrestling or roughhousing with your hands, otherwise, it teaches the cat that it's all right to use claws and teeth on you.
- Avoid string, wool, curling ribbon (used for gift packages), or anything similar, as cats can ingest these substances and cause serious internal problems.
- If you work all day, greet your cat affectionately when you arrive home and give him a few minutes of your undivided attention.
- Allow your pet to be with you in the evening. A brief play period and just being petted every evening will keep him happy. Set time aside for longer play periods. Many behavior issues are avoided by spending quality time with your cat.



Be Aware of Normal Cat Behavior

- Part of playing with your cat may include mock hunting: stalking, ambushing and pouncing. These can be delightful antics to watch, but be aware that anything that moves may become a target (including you).
- Cats also incorporate climbing and leaping into play routines. A young or determined cat can jump two or three times his body length. Cats desire to be on high surfaces to survey their territory for prey or intruders.

Sleeping and Relaxing

- Cats love high places to perch and look out from and cozy safe places to hide and sleep. You can buy “kitty condos” or leave suitable closets open. NOTE: always check that your cat is not inside before closing pretty much anything – especially the dryer!
- Letting your cat sleep on your bed and relax on your lap will add pleasure and contentment to her life and yours! (Cats can sleep as much as 18 hours a day.)
- Know that your bed time may not be the same as your cat’s. They are largely nocturnal. Your cat’s increased activity around the bedroom or house at some early morning hour is not a behavior problem, just instinctual.
- Playing with your cat prior to your bed time and feeding your cat when you go to bed may help her sleep peacefully at night.

Litter Box Training

The general rule of thumb is one litter box per cat plus an extra box for insurance. Here are some tips that will help ensure that your cat uses its litter box:



- Place the litter box in a convenient location, but it must be private and quiet for the cat (a laundry room or hallway may be too noisy and busy).
- Keep the boxes away from heavy traffic areas and the cat’s feeding area. Be certain a shy cat can reach the box without feeling threatened or exposed.
- **Scoop away waste every day** – this makes kitty happy. Remember, you wouldn’t like to use your toilet if it wasn’t flushed regularly!
- **Thoroughly clean and wash the box once a month.** Empty out all the litter, wash with dish soap and dry. Plastic absorbs the smell of the waste. Cats like to use “clean” litter boxes, and may start having “accidents” if the box smells bad.
- When you first arrive home with your new cat, calmly place her in the litter box a few times to be sure she knows the location.
- Allowing the cat to watch you when you scoop the litter box has been reported to encourage the cat to jump in and use it.
- You may need to experiment with different types of litter until you find the one that is acceptable to your cat. Any accidents should be cleaned with an enzyme-based cleaner.

Why is my cat not using the litter box?

You need to determine if the problem is inappropriate elimination or territorial marking. If your cat is marking, you will usually find the urine has been deposited on vertical surfaces, whereas inappropriate toileting is on horizontal surfaces. Each has different suggested remedies. For territorial marking (spraying), look into what has changed in your cat’s environment that may cause him or her to feel the need to assert a presence in an area.

Your veterinarian should perform a health exam to rule out any underlying medical reasons for the behavior.

Possible reasons for inappropriate elimination:

- The cat has not learned the location of the litter box or forgets where it is, if allowed too much house to roam. This is especially true for kittens.
- The cat may have a physiological or physical condition (illness). Any cat displaying inappropriate litter box habits should see your veterinarian right away to rule out infection or other medical issues.
- The cat may not like the brand of litter, so try some others simultaneously. Observe which one he selects.
- The litter box is not clean. Soiled areas should be removed DAILY. The entire pan should be emptied and washed at least once a month, replacing with fresh litter.
- The litter box has been disinfected with a strong smelling solution and needs to be rinsed thoroughly. Cats do not like strong smells.
- The cat is soiling an area previously used for elimination by another pet. Clean thoroughly with an enzyme-based cleaner.
- Place the food bowl on a previously soiled spot as this may deter the cat, or place another litter box on the spot.
- The location of the litter box may be unacceptable; try a new quiet area.
- Another pet may be keeping the cat away.
- Another cat is using the litter box. Some cats will not share a litter box, especially at first.
- A child or pet is terrorizing the new cat while you are not there, causing fear-related elimination or the cat simply may be responding to stress or family and household changes.

Be Patient and Consistent

- It can take a few weeks for a cat to settle – not much to ask for a new lifelong friend and companion. NEVER PUNISH the cat for making a mistake. This may make the problem much worse. Patience and praise work far more quickly to solve any problems.
- You can look at the Oregon Humane Society’s website at www.oregonhumane.org for pet behavior advice.



Understanding Body Language & Behavior

Cats have a varied body language. Here are some ways to read your cat's more subtle language:

- **EYES** – The pupils tell you a lot. Watch for dilated wide pupils, as this indicates fear and stress. Try to avoid petting or picking up a cat with widely dilated pupils!
- **EARS** – Ears flattened and pressed on to the head is an expression of fear or defense.
- **TAIL** – A cat holding his tail straight up is displaying confidence and pride.
 - A bottlebrush tail is a sign of fear/stress. Also watch for a slow wag of mild annoyance, and finally the slow twitching of the tail indicating your cat has had enough!
- **PURRING** – While generally thought of as a sign of affection, purring can also indicate a serious problem. Injured cats may also purr just as much as if they are being affectionately petted. They may purr to comfort and reassure themselves when they are nervous or in pain.
- **ON-GOING TRAINING** – Cats love routine. Many do the same thing at the same time daily. Something as simple as closing the door to the room they routinely sleep in during the afternoon can cause a behavior change. Watch for these types of changes to your cat's routine when assessing a behavior problem.

The best training tools are patience and praise of the desirable behavior.

If your cat is demonstrating behavior problems, call your veterinarian or one of the volunteers listed on the front of this booklet.

There is now a lot of information about cat behavior. The internet and several books address specific problems. **DO NOT PUNISH YOUR CAT!** This is not only ineffective, but can damage the trust bond you have built.

A list of books and on-line resources are listed at in Chapter 9.



Dispelling Myths about Felines

You should allow your female cat to have one litter before spaying her.

- **FALSE.** Having a litter will not only add to the high pet overpopulation problem, but having kittens can cause stress on body and there can be medical complications with pregnancy and birth.
- Also, spaying your cat greatly reduces the incidence of uterine and breast tumors (up to 90%).
- Remember SPAY AND NEUTER NOW as cats can reproduce as young as 4 months of age.
- If you have a cat that is not spayed/neutered, contact SNYP for low-cost options.



An indoor only female does not need to be spayed.

- **FALSE.** Not only will you experience the restlessness and noise of your cat's heat cycle, but she will discover any and every way to get out of the house. Heat can be experienced as frequently as every other month.

A fixed cat will get fat.

- **FALSE.** Only a cat that eats too much and does not get enough playful exercise will get fat.

Only a male cat can spray.

- **FALSE.** Spraying is territorial marking. While usually associated with tom cats, your spayed female or neutered male may spray if she or he perceives a threat on territory.
- Female cats are known to spray when they are nursing kittens, to establish their territory.



Cats are street smart and can do just fine outside.

- **FALSE.** Cats are domesticated pets. They face many hazards outside that can and do shorten their lives.
- Dangers include cars, other cats, dogs, predators, like coyotes, as well as eating poison (such as fertilizer and treated compost).
- Your cat is dependent upon you for her health, safety and survival so keep her indoors!

Cats are loners.

- **FALSE.** Cats are NOT asocial animals and do want companionship. They may not desire to accompany you like a dog, but your cat will let you know when it is time for interaction and play, and when it is time for solitude.
- Cats often enjoy the companionship of other cats. Friends of the Animal Shelter and the Jackson County Animal Shelter encourage "2-Fur-1" adoptions, where you adopt two kittens/cats that have been raised together and/or get along in the Shelter, and pay only one adoption fee.

Chapter 4 - Feline Health Concerns & Treatment

Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)

- Your cat may have a cold when you get him home. Cats are subject to an airborne virus disease that is very similar to the common cold experienced by humans. It is called URI (Upper Respiratory Infection), and we deal with it every day in the Shelter. We do all we can to prevent its spread, including carefully disinfecting our kennels and vaccinating for FVCRP.
- Despite our best efforts, some cats will come down with URI. When multiple cats are confined to one room, a single sneeze from a cat can expose all the others, just like a cold is spread through a classroom. Also, all the cats in the Shelter are under stress just by virtue of being here, which lowers their resistance to illness.
- If your cat begins to sneeze or has a runny nose or eyes within 6 days after you get him/her home, chances are that the cat has come down with URI. The virus is quite contagious to other cats, so if you have any resident cats, keep them separate.
- You can expect symptoms to continue for 7-10 days and they may vary in intensity (just like a cold!). The cat may sneeze, have discharge from eyes and nose, drool and breathe with difficulty through his or her mouth.
- The cat may lose its appetite and even stop drinking. If the discharge from your cat's eyes and nose is watery and the cat's temperature is normal, you are dealing with "simple" URI virus.
- Mucous and fever are indicators that a secondary bacterial infection is complicating the picture. With these conditions the cat most likely will need antibiotics. It is imperative that you seek veterinary treatment for the cat as soon as possible.

Can my other pets get URI?

- URI is contagious to other cats. Vaccinating against URI is not 100% effective, so it is a good idea to isolate cats that are showing signs of URI, and wash your hands after handling sick cats.
- We recommend isolating all new arrivals in your household for 8-10 days after adoption to give them a chance to settle in and make sure they are not coming down with anything. URI is not contagious to people or to animals other than cats.

What are signs of URI?

- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Red/runny eyes
- Fever
- Sores on tongue/lips/nose
- Lack of appetite
- Decreased energy



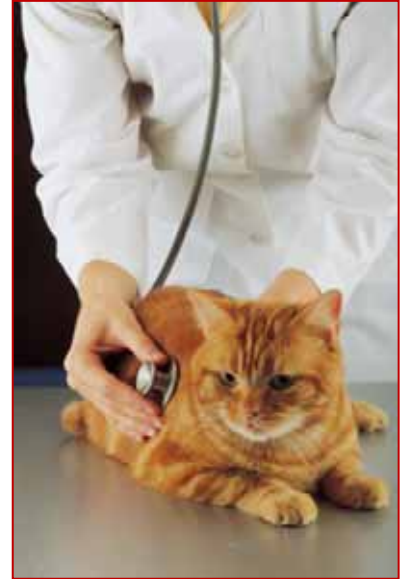
What should I do if my new cat has URI?

- Provide your cat with a quiet, warm place to rest.
- Make sure the cat is eating. Sometimes with a stuffy nose they can't smell their food very well and may not want to eat. Offer smelly wet food to increase their appetite.
- If the cat is congested, use a humidifier or put the cat in the bathroom and run hot water in the shower for a few minutes a couple of times a day.
- Moderate to severe congestion is often a sign of a secondary bacterial infection, so contact your veterinarian to discuss treatment if this occurs.
- If any medicine has been prescribed, be sure to give the full course as directed, even if the symptoms seem to have gone away.

When should I contact my veterinarian?

With rest and care, many cats will recover from mild URI in one or two weeks. Sometimes cats need additional help, however. If your cat has any of the following signs, contact your veterinarian:

- Not eating for more than 24 hours.
- Green or yellow discharge from the nose or eyes.
- Difficulty breathing, especially panting or breathing with an open mouth.
- Depressed or unresponsive.
- Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts more than 24 hours.
- Little or no improvement after a week of care.



Feline Panleukopenia

Feline Panleukopenia (also known as feline distemper) is a rare but infectious viral disease of cats. It attacks susceptible cats of all ages, but young cats and kittens seem to be most vulnerable.

- Symptoms of Panleukopenia include vomiting and diarrhea, lethargy, and lack of appetite.
- The disease strikes suddenly and progresses rapidly. It is often fatal.
- Take your cat to a veterinarian immediately.

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP)

- Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) is a disease that, fortunately, most cat owners will never need to know about first hand. It affects about one in 100 cats – most under the age of two.
- There is no treatment for the disease, and it is almost always fatal. Vaccination has not proven effective against this disease.
- The risk of contracting FIP is highest in kittens in the first year of life, and becomes very low after two years of age.
- If your kitten or cat shows any sign of illness, please take him to a veterinarian, who can provide more information about this devastating disease.



Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV)

- Feline Leukemia (FeLV) is a virus that causes a breakdown in a cat's immune system. This, in turn, causes the cat to become susceptible to many other diseases which a healthy cat might otherwise be able to fight off.
- Cats over 1 year, or a mother cat and her babies, are tested at the Shelter.
- FeLV vaccines are reasonably effective in preventing persistent FeLV infection should your cat be exposed to the virus. No vaccine is 100% effective. The immune response produced by these vaccines will protect most cats from becoming infected with the virus. Consult your veterinarian regarding sufficient inoculations for your new cat or kitten.

Feline Immuno-deficiency Virus (FIV)

- We also test for FIV. This virus does not have to be a death sentence. With certain precautions, cats can live long lives. It cannot be transmitted to humans or dogs, and is difficult to transmit to other cats. FIV-positive cats must be indoor-only pets. Talk to your vet. Many shelters now offer FIV-positive cats for adoption. An excellent resource for additional information is www.vet.cornell.edu.

Shelter Treatments, Procedures, Vaccines & Recommendations

While at the shelter, the cat you adopted may have received the following vaccines and/or treatments.

FVRCP

- This is a standard vaccine administered to cats. It is sometimes referred to as the Distemper (Feline Panleukopenia) vaccine but it also includes immunity to the Rhinotracheitis and Calici viruses.
- Kittens and some cats may need additional doses administered by your veterinarian over a period of weeks to achieve maximum immunity from diseases. Until these are complete, it is best to limit the exposure of your kitten to other cats.
- Many serious cat illnesses are spread through sneezing and nose touching with other cats.
- Limit contact until you are certain that your new cat is healthy. While at the shelter, all cats and kittens receive initial vaccines at admission to help ensure they receive maximum protection against illness and disease.
- Upon adoption, follow your veterinarian's advice regarding a vaccination and booster schedule for your cat or kitten.

Worming

- A dose of medicine to eliminate roundworms and/ or tapeworms was given. Do not be surprised to see worms passed in your cat's elimination. This is to be expected.
- Continued treatment and other types of parasite control may be provided by your veterinarian, depending on your cat's individual needs.

Rabies Vaccine

- Few cats at the Shelter are vaccinated against rabies. This should be reflected in the Shelter paperwork and a copy given to adopters to take to their veterinarian. Follow your veterinarian's advice regarding follow-up or initial vaccination.

Antibiotics

- When an animal is sick with an upper respiratory infection, we may administer a course of antibiotics.
- If your cat is on medication at the time of adoption, it will be important that you follow up with your veterinarian regarding recovery and the need to continue the medication or treatment.
- Upper respiratory infection is a nuisance, but common in an environment with many cats of undetermined medical background. It is necessary to keep the new cat away from existing cats in the household until it is no longer showing symptoms.

Flea/Parasite Control

- Many products exist that protect your cat from fleas and parasites. Ask your veterinarian for information about different approaches to flea control.
- Fleas carry diseases that may be harmful to the cat, causing life-threatening illnesses.
- Keeping fleas off your cat also keeps fleas out of your house. Flea infestation in your home can spread rapidly and is hard to eliminate.



Spaying/Neutering

- Unaltered cats are spayed or neutered before adoption from JCAS. If your cat or kitten was altered recently, be sure to monitor the surgery site carefully for signs of swelling or discharge.
- Follow up with your veterinarian for removal of stitches, usually 7-10 days after spaying. This can sometimes be done at the same time of your free wellness exam. Males rarely have stitches, except in the case of an undescended testical at the time of neutering.
- All animals adopted from the Jackson County Animal Shelter are altered to prevent domestic animal overpopulation. Altering dogs and cats also keeps them healthier easier to live with, and will help them live longer, as their instinct to wander in search of a mate is eliminated!

Grooming

- Persian and long-hair cats require ongoing grooming; it is necessary for their health and well-being. Grooming is not just for looks; it prevents painful mats and allows the skin to breathe. Neglecting this type of care can cause needless suffering.
- If you are not able to accommodate your cat's grooming needs yourself, ask your veterinarian to recommend a good groomer.
- Ask the groomer for advice on tools and things you can do at home to prevent matting.
- Long-haired cats can be shaved safely, which greatly decreases maintenance. Not all groomers will work with cats, but many will.

Licensing

- Cat licensing is not required by law; however we do encourage vaccination against rabies and licensing for all cats over 7 months of age. This is for their protection and identification.

Chapter 5 – Introducing Your Cat to Other Pets

Before introducing your new cat to your other pets, make sure your existing pets are healthy and current with their vaccinations. **Introducing your cat to other pets should be done slowly over a period of weeks.** **REMEMBER – it may take a month or more for the new cat to be accepted.** A proper introduction is very important and can eliminate many problems from the start.

Cats in Your Home?

- Prepare a spare room (like a bathroom or small spare bedroom) where your new cat can reside for a while before being introduced to the other pets. Put the new cat in a separate room as soon as you get home.
- Find two clean cloths. With the cats still separated, use one cloth to rub one cat's cheeks (the scent gland); use the second cloth to rub the other cat's cheeks. Now, exchange the cloths so that each cat has the chance to sniff/smell the other cat. Smell is the first and very important introduction. Hearing, seeing, and finally, meeting, are the next steps.
- Bring the new cat out in a cat carrier and allow existing cat to sniff.
- Let the cats sniff under the door and get used to new scents. If you have a baby gate, allow them to see and sniff each other for a short time, with supervision.
- Introduce your most friendly and social cat first.
- Do not force a meeting, and never restrain your cat (especially in your lap!).
- Do NOT allow one cat to attack another.
- Even if all seems well, separate when you're not at home to supervise.
- The slower you go, the better the outcome. Unfortunately, more "new" cats are returned to the Shelter because the adoptive family tries to "rush" this process, than for any other reason. Take your time! You'll be glad you did! (And so will your cats!)
- If the meeting does not go well, please go back to the preceding steps and allow more time.



You Existing Cat(s)-to-Your New Cat

- If your new cat is showing signs of illness, please do not introduce it to your existing cat until you consult with your veterinarian.
- Make sure the new cat has a place to himself for a few days, allowing him time to adjust.
- Spend time with your new cat out of sight of your existing cat. Be sure to lavish attention on your existing cat as well ... you don't want them to resent you by being ignored!
- Allow your existing cat to follow his usual routine. He will be aware that something is different and will seek out the location of the new cat. Allow them to sniff under the door.
- After your new cat is settled, swap the cats so they can investigate each other's areas. Getting used to each other's scents is an integral part of adjustment. If all seems to be going well, allow the cats to meet one another through a screen/baby gate or crate, etc.
- It is normal for cats to hiss and growl at each other, but an all-out physical attack is very inappropriate and rare. However, be prepared with a water spray and a towel or blanket to

separate the cats, as allowing them to fight will elongate the introduction period or may even damage the process altogether.

- After a comfortable period of introductions through a baby gate or screen, allow the cats to meet formally at meal time. Place their bowls in separate parts of the room. If this goes well the bowls can gradually be moved closer to each other over a few days. Allow only short periods of contact, increasing as time goes on.
- Interactive play using a wand toy (not your hands), also gets them used to one another's company without direct focus on each other.
- Once the new cat has been allowed access to the rest of the house, leave his safe room intact so he may take refuge there. Improvement in attitudes toward each other should begin in a week or so. Do not be discouraged if it takes longer.
- The length of adjustment will depend on the personalities of the cats and the length of time your existing cat was a solitary pet.
- **Be sure to lavish attention on all your cats to make everyone feel part of the family.** The social interaction level may vary; you may have cats that groom, play and sleep with each other, or just tolerate the existence of the other – and that is okay, too!

Dogs in Your Home?

- First, prepare a safe room and have a clear escape route set for your new cat, as a precaution to the encounter. Make sure the dog does not have access to the cat's food and water and especially the litter box! Use a baby gate or cat door to block the dog's access.
- Allow the cat time to adjust in a cat-safe room for a few days.
- Let the dog and cat sniff each other under the door.
- Keep the dog leashed when he sees the cat, and gives the dog tasty food treats (or his favorite reward) for sitting/lying calmly and staying relaxed in sight of the cat.
- Do not restrain the cat in your lap or arms – allow the cat freedom to move away if she needs to.
- Do not allow your dog to become aroused or excited with the new cat around. This can lead to the chase/prey drive. Don't play rough.
- Separate the new cat when left alone; put her in her "safe" room.
- When introducing your new cat to a dog, put the cat on a raised surface like a table or dresser. This will help the cat feel less threatened. Put your dog on a leash. Allow them to see each other (try to keep the leash loose) and then distract the dog with a treat or praise.
- With a collar on the dog, let him drag the leash around the house so you can grab it if necessary. It is normal for the cat to hiss/growl at first, especially if she has not lived with a dog before.
- Cats take time to adjust to changes; the more the animals are together in the same room, with you to supervise, the quicker they will adjust. Arm yourself with a squirt bottle and spray them with water if they start to fight. You can also throw a towel over the cat if she attacks the dog. Make sure the cat has an escape route or can leap to a high place. Do not let the dog chase and/or corner the cat, or vice versa.



- Separate them when you are not there to supervise until you are comfortable with the situation. Some dogs are too predatory to adjust safely to a cat. Proceed with caution and, if you find this is the case, never leave them together unsupervised.
- If your cat hides, don't worry. Keep the well-behaved dog around as much as possible so the cat can get comfortable with his presence.
- Make sure the cat has a private place not accessible to the dog where she can eat and drink in peace and feel safe. Ensure that the cat has unthreatened access to her litter box.
- Allow the pets to adjust in their own time – be patient and act calm and relaxed. Often they become friends; sometimes they just tolerate each other. Either way you should respect the arrangement.

Cat to Other Pets

Remember, cats are curious. Fish, rabbits, rodents, birds, etc., should be protected from the inquisitive cat. These animals are the natural prey of cats and may become very stressed around your new pet, especially if she is sitting on top of their house! Make sure cages and fish tanks are secure and well maintained; they may have to be in another room altogether.



Chapter 6 – Children and Cats

Kids in the Home?

- Supervise, supervise, and supervise every interaction!
- If there are children in your household, it is important to teach them how to handle and act with your new cat to avoid stressing the cat and causing potential injury to both. Children learn responsibility by good examples, so please guide your children and regularly monitor the care being provided for your pets.



Here are some guidelines to help your children and your new cat live happily together:

- Instruct children to be calm, quiet, and slow moving when being introduced to the cat.
- A kitten or cat should be picked up and held with one hand under its chest and the other hand supporting its hindquarters.
- Handle the cat gently and tell children not to squeeze or hold too tightly. Most children under the age of 5 cannot hold a cat properly without squeezing too tight.
- Young children should be taught to sit calmly while you place the cat in their laps. This way everyone is safe and happy.
- Children should leave the cat alone when he is sleeping, eating and using the litter box. Also, instruct youngsters not to put the cat in inappropriate places like the dryer, on the top bunk, in a closed box, etc.
- Cats should not be dragged out of hiding against their will. Children should not chase the cat around the house.
- If cornered and frightened, the cat may scratch and bite or may become timid. Never leave young children alone with a new pet. Teach children appropriate play and petting.
- Do not allow them to encourage the cat to bite them or run after them. The children should not BE the toys. Provide safe toys for both the cat and the kids.
- Teach children to look for signals that show their pet is getting irritated or over-stimulated. A swishing tail, ears back or gentle nips can lead to being scratched or bitten.
- Always allow the cat to escape if he tries to run. If the cat struggles to get away, let him go!
- Never allow rough handling, as this teaches the cat that it is OK to be rough in return!
- Do not allow your kids to be rough with the cat – instead, have them scratch the cat on its head and face only.
- Do not scratch a cat on its belly or pull its tail.
- It is best if kids do not pick up the cat or squeeze too tightly.
- Do not let kids crowd or corner the cat.
- Do not have visiting children until the cat has settled.
- Do not let the kids try to pull a cat out of a hiding spot.
- Never let kids chase a cat or grab for a running cat.
- If cat is stressed, frightened or angry by all means leave them alone. Allow them to hide until they are ready to come out.

Chapter 7 – Things You Can Do to Prevent Losing Your Cat

We recommend keeping your cat inside. Predators and cars take the lives of many felines every year. At the very least, bring them in at night. Supervise them in the beginning. Even if they are indoor-only, get an elastic collar with a name tag and phone number, or get them microchipped. Elastic collars are sold at local pet stores, and cats can slip out of them easily, preventing strangulation.

Walking Your Cat

If you want them to experience the outdoors, you can train them to walk on an adjustable cat harness and leash (or lead line). Unlike a dog, you won't be giving directional corrections. "Walking" really means "exploring safely" ... you can't really tell a cat what to do ... but, you already know that! You always get them used to the harness and leash and try walking them INSIDE, so that they have time to get used to this new contraption on their body ... and the concept of walking with it on.



Here is an on-line video for learning how to "walk" your feline friend:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUAI8xrnztc>

You can even find enclosed pet strollers in local pet stores, as well as on-line. Make sure you have a harness and leash on your cat IN the stroller, just in case!

Microchip

If you choose to microchip your cat, remember to keep your contact information current! All microchip manufacturers have on-line portals for maintaining your contact information, usually at no cost. All cats are scanned for microchips when they come to the Shelter as strays.

Catios / Yard Containment

To completely contain your yard, or a portion of it, check out Purrfect Fence on-line:

www.purrfectfence.com. And "Catios" are becoming more popular, where your cats have access to a secure enclosure outside, accessible via a pet door from your house. Go on-line and search on "Catio" for some great, simple building ideas. Even a secure screened patio can give them some fresh air. These are alternatives that are safe, and eliminate worry for owners.

New Home? Take Extra Time!

After adoption, keep your new cat in for two months, or a year for kittens. If you are moving, make a safe room in the new house and follow the directions in the first chapter of this booklet. This is a common time for cats to disappear with all the moving commotion. They will be unfamiliar with their new territory, and

sometimes try to find their way back to their old home. Introduce them to their new “outside” with your supervision and let them mark their territory. (See more below.)

Chapter 8 – If Your Cat Goes Missing

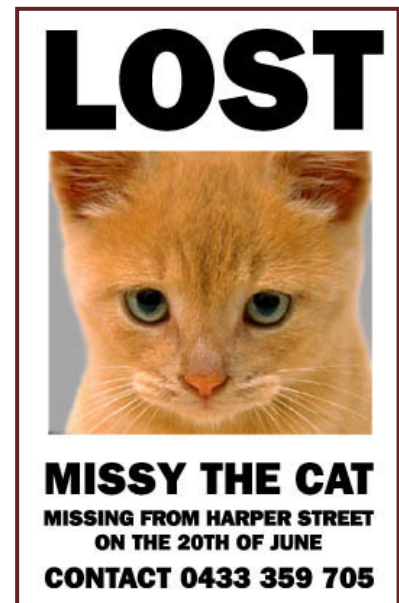
ONLY 4% OF CATS THAT COME TO THE SHELTER AS STRAYS ARE CLAIMED BY THEIR OWNERS!

If you are moving, be particularly aware that many, many cats “go missing” when they get to their new home. Plan ahead and create a “safe room” during the moving process, when the doors may be left open by mistake – like when furniture is being moved in.

Once you’re moved in, establish a “safe room” as described on page 3. Cat need to create a new routine, get used to the smell of their new “territory,” and time and patience to adjust to their new surroundings.

If your cat goes missing, here are a few tips that may help you.

1. Be an active participant; don’t just wait for your cat to come home. More often than not, they are scared and hiding.
2. One of our staff members passed this on; I call it Donna’s Trick. Go out at dusk or dawn with their kibble container. Stand by your residence, shake it and call your cat’s name (or even meow, sometimes you will get a return meow). Close your eyes and listen closely. Continue to do this around your house, gradually enlarging the perimeter. Look under the house and any other place a cat might hide (remember they can squeeze into small spaces). Having a flashlight will help. You can also equip yourself with some tuna; occasionally a kitty will be very scared, but hungry, and come out for food.
 - Do this every day, morning and evening if possible.
3. Call the Jackson County Animal Shelter (541 774-6654) to submit a Lost Cat report.
 - Provide a full description of your cat, when it when missing, and your contact information. It is best to come to the shelter to look for your cat yourself – and to continuously monitor found cats, or cats currently in adoption, to see if your cat is there.
4. Post flyers in your neighborhood with a brief description, photo and your phone number. Take this with you and talk to your neighbors. Sometimes there will have been sightings.
5. Post on Craig’s list or other social media. Again a photo is very useful.
6. Go to www.petharbor.com. Follow cues to get to lost cats.
7. Check www.petfinder.com for adoptable cats at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, Southern Oregon Humane Society and C.A.T.S.
8. Don’t give up. Keep looking and asking around. Some cats show up after days, weeks or months. Try to hold on to at least a small window of hope. Cats can astound (and confound) us!



Chapter 9 – Additional Resources

- Mieshelle Nagelscheider’s book “The Cat Whisperer” and www.catwhisperer.com. Her material provides more information on how to introduce cats, as well as how to address many behavioral issues you may be experiencing with your new or current cat(s). Available through the Jackson County Library system.
- “Think Like a Cat” by Pam Johnson Bennett. Her second book “Cat vs. Cat” deals with issues in multi-cat households. Available through the Jackson County Library system.
- Disaster Preparedness: www.ready.gov/animals
- Change of Life Status: If something should happen to you, what will become of your pet(s)? Having a backup plan provides your pet with options, and you with peace of mind. Listed below are on-line resources that can help you set up your plan:
 - www.humanesociety.org/animals/resources/tips/providing_for_pets_future_without_you.html
 - www.legalzoom.com/knowledge/pet-protection/topic/what-happens-to-my-pets-when-i-pass-away
 - www.legalzoom.com/knowledge/pet-protection
 - www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/estate-planning-pets.html

Chapter 10 - Conclusion

Animals in our life are a blessing and an opportunity to share our world with another species. “Working through” behavior and medical issues will deepen your relationship with your animals and provide a valuable lesson to children and adults, teaching that the bond is indeed one that will endure tough times and last for the lifetime of your pet. “Getting rid” of an animal because it does not meet your expectations, has not been taught proper manners or needs extensive medical care is a poor example of animal ownership. Please join the ranks of responsible pet owners and stand by your new friend.

If you are having problems, please call your Friends of the Animal Shelter cat Adoption Ambassador or one of the other numbers at the front of this booklet. We are not all experts, but we do have many combined years of experience and also know of many resources. We want to support you and make this a positive experience for all involved.

Congratulations on Your New Cat!

Have fun embarking on this enriching life adventure together!



Chapter 11 – Volunteering with Friends of the Animal Shelter

Each year, Friends of the Animal Shelter volunteers help the Shelter care for thousands of lost, abandoned, and stray pets. Would you like to make a difference in the lives of these animals?

CAT CARE

Volunteer to spend time petting, grooming and socializing cats that are waiting to be adopted. Daily attention and tender loving care helps to keep cats friendly and relieves the stress from living in a kennel. Cat volunteers help the cats look and feel better, which helps them get adopted.

DOG WALKING

Volunteer to walk dogs that are waiting for a family to give them good home. Daily walks provide dogs with mental stimulation, socialization, exercise, and training. It is rewarding to see how enthusiastically the dogs respond to their walker companions and how calm and well behaved they are when perspective adopters come to visit.

ADOPTIONS

Help pets find new homes by answering potential adopters' questions at the Shelter and outreach events. Adoption Ambassadors can be one of the most rewarding volunteer opportunities because you help potential adopters find a pet that matches their personality and lifestyle, thus ensuring the pet has a permanent, loving home.

FOSTERING

Foster parents provide a temporary “home between homes” for dogs/puppies and cats/kittens prior to adoption. Providing foster care is a wonderful and personal way to contribute to saving homeless pets.



YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

At age 10, young volunteers can start with handling cats; at age 13 they can start volunteering with dogs. All volunteers under age 18 need to have a parent with them whenever they volunteer at the Shelter.

And other volunteer opportunities are available!



PO Box 1013 • Phoenix, Oregon 97535

www.fotas.org 🐾 LIKE US! www.facebook.com/fotas

To inquire about Volunteering or Donating, please contact

(541) 774-6651 🐾 fotasjc@gmail.com