

Cat Supplies

Every well-kept cat needs some basic supplies. Many kinds of supplies are available, so your choices will depend on your and your cat's needs and preferences. Here are some basic guidelines regarding cat supplies.

Food and Water Dishes

Metal or ceramic dishes are best because plastic can cause a skin reaction in some cats. Make sure that you give your cat fresh water every day.

Toys

The best cat toys can be made to look alive, such as wand toys from which something dangles. Wand toys should be put away after play so that (1) you can use them to interact and bond with your cat, (2) you can inspect them to ensure that they are still safe, and (3) your cat is less likely to become bored with them. Balls, food puzzle toys, and catnip toys are other feline favorites. Don't use your hands or fingers as "toys" for kittens or cats; this may lead to unwanted biting and scratching behaviors. Some cats become very excited and even aggressive when exposed to catnip, so be careful around your cat during and after play with catnip toys.

Food puzzle toys are sturdy containers, usually made of hard rubber or plastic, with holes in which

food or treats can be placed. Cats must paw, roll, chew, or lick the toy to remove the food. Food puzzle toys can offer a natural solution to your cat's hunting instinct.

Brush and Comb

The various types of brushes and combs are designed for different purposes. Brushing your cat helps to remove dirt and loose, dead hair; prevent mats and tangles; and reduce the amount of hair your cat swallows during grooming, possibly leading to fewer hairballs.

Safety Cat Collar With ID Tag

A safety (breakaway) collar can prevent your cat from getting hurt if the collar gets caught on something. Even indoor-only cats can get outside and become lost, so a collar and ID tag are recommended for all cats.

Scratching Posts and/or Pads

Cats need to scratch to keep their nails healthy. Provide your cat with a sturdy scratching post that is at least 3 ft high to allow him or her to do a full-body stretch when scratching. The post should be covered with rough material such as sisal, burlap, or tree bark. Many cats also like scratching pads. Sprinkle catnip on the posts or pads once or twice a month to maintain your cat's interest in them.

Litterbox

Many cats prefer large, uncovered litterboxes, although some cats like covered litterboxes. If you have more than one cat, you'll need one litterbox per cat plus one more litterbox.

Litter and Litter Scoop

Many cats prefer unscented, scoopable litter.

Cat Carrier

A safe, comfortable carrier is essential.

Cat Supplies Checklist

- Food and water dishes
- Toys
- Brush and comb
- Safety cat collar with ID tag
- Scratching posts and/or pads
- Litterbox
- Litter and litter scoop
- Cat carrier
- Bed
- Leash and harness
- Cat toothbrush and toothpaste

Caring for Your New Pet

Bed

A warm, comfortable bed is very important for your cat. Be sure to clean your cat's bedding regularly.

Leash and Harness

A safe option for allowing your cat outdoors is to train him or her to walk on a leash with you. First, you must train your cat to accept a harness (for

walking your cat, a harness is much more secure than a collar). Ask your veterinarian for advice about this.

Cat Toothbrush and Toothpaste

Use a specially designed pet toothbrush or baby toothbrush with pet toothpaste (do not use toothpaste for people because it can upset your cat's stomach).