
Caring for Cats – The Easy Way

You will need a great deal of commitment in order to own a cat as they do require some care (although not as much as dogs!) and can live as old as 15 years (or even longer in some cases). Cats require feeding (daily), care and 'play time' on a regular basis. You will also have to take into consideration, before getting your cat, that you will have vets' bills to pay for annual vaccines, worming and if treatment is required for any illnesses.

These bills can sometimes be very costly, but you can purchase insurance for pets – it may be a good idea to 'shop around' to get the best deal. Before getting your cat, you should purchase bowls for food and water, a collar (if you want the cat to wear one), a bed (or pet quilt), a few suitable toys, and some food. A kitten should be fed throughout the day 4 times with a small amount of food each meal, reducing to 3 times a day at 3 months old, then at 6-8 months 2 meals per day. Older cats (over 12 months) should only be fed twice in the day (usually morning and early evening).

Cats groom themselves, but using a soft brush on the cat, especially the long haired variety, will help to cut down the number of hairballs in the cat's stomach, which are caused by them licking / grooming themselves.

If you decide to have a cat-flap fitted to your door in order that the cat can come and go as it pleases, you will have to train it to use the flap. You can use tit-bits to entice the cat to go through the flap, when it is fully open. Start by opening the flap fully, just showing the tit-bit, then next time close the flap a little bit and keep on doing so until the cat realises that the flap will open with a small push of the head.

Cats like to sharpen their claws on most household furniture! Suites, corners of walls (thick paper), carpets. Invest in a scratch post – there are many to choose from. When the cat starts to scratch, lift the cat and place him/her next to the scratch post, they will soon get the message and use the post instead of the furniture. If you are concerned about your cat going missing, or it being involved in an accident, you can have a micro-chip (approximately the size of a grain of rice) inserted into the back of the cat's neck. The chip contains information, which can help to identify the cat as belonging to you. It is often said that 'a cat looks after itself'.

This is obviously not really true, but they do have a more independent nature than some other domesticated pets. That said, they still make ideal companions when they 'allow' you to be their friend.