



# Cat Adoption Booklet

Version OCT 2021



My Adopted Cat is: \_\_\_\_\_

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# THANK YOU

*For adopting & making  
them apart of your family*



As you probably already know your new pussy cat came from a pound as an unclaimed or surrendered cat.

To help you settle them into your home and keep them happy and safe, we have put together this booklet filled with important information and handy guidelines. Please take them time to read through this and give us a call if you have any questions or problems with settling them into your home or email Antonette at [toni.brisland@gmail.com](mailto:toni.brisland@gmail.com). We have spent many years working with abandoned waifs and know that some need very special care.

Thank you for giving an abandoned orphan a second chance in life.

Warmest regards,

*Monika*

Monika Biernacki OAM

Founder & CEO



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## WHAT WE RECOMMEND FOR YOUR CAT

The safest environment for a cat and for Australian wildlife is in the confines of your house. Monika's DoggieRescue Cats are conditioned to being indoors with an enclosed verandah.

It is wise for your cat to wear a Cat Collar with bells, his/her name on a tag and your phone number and address.

### **Recommended items for your new cat:**

- 1 strong secure carry capsule per cat. It must be large enough for your adult cat to stand up, stretch out and turn around, be easy to clean, front opening and secure.
- Ceramic feed and water bowls - several. Plastic could give them a chin and nose rash; cats generally don't like stainless steel, some say it's the smell of the bowl.
- Kitty Litter Trays. The golden rule is one per cat plus one. That is, if you have 2 cats you need 3 litter trays. Tray size depends on the size of the cat. If it has to pee with 2 legs outside the tray or is spraying the wall behind, then the tray is too small.
- 1 Plastic litter scoop (to scoop out poop).
- Kitty litter. We suggest Breeders' Choice Recycled paper litter.
- Blankets for sleeping (or wrapping a sick cat or catching a cat), donut soft bed, and a flannelette sheet or sheep skin for their carry cage.
- Several carpet-covered and/or sisal scratch trees, for sharpening claws, exercising, stretching and climbing. If you don't provide these, your cat will use your furniture instead. In addition, carpet squares to put over the carpet in your home where your cat likes to scratch, or sleep and/or cane clothesbaskets will give them an alternative to your furniture. Perhaps, perches – drilled into walls with steps or scratching trees for access. Floor mats.
- A strong slicker brush, a strong bristle brush and a comb of good quality for grooming to prevent knots which hurt in semi- and long-hair cats, and for grooming/bonding with short and long hair cats.
- Several good quality clothes brushes for your clothes as fur can be a nuisance at moulting time.
- Gentle shampoo suitable for cats; non-slip mat for cat to stand on at sink. Dry them in a carry cage into which is directed hot air from a fan heater.
- Toys, including ping pong or other small balls with bells, tiny mice, Air Prey Wand, a tunnel, material spiders/animals and moths and there are lots of others in pet shops. Cats like to play and be crazy twice a day. Play with them. Some learn to play chase and some can learn to fetch. (When you play with her/him you are amusing them, not the other way around).
- For fur balls, there are good quality products available.
- Nail Clippers for clipping the tips of cat's claws.
- Pill popper for giving tablets and syringe for liquid medicine.



# MICROCHIP-REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

## COMPULSORY & FREE LIFETIME REGISTRATION

All DoggieRescue.com cats are microchipped. As the new owner, you are now required to register your cat under the Companion Animals Act with your local council, and this covers the cat for its lifetime in NSW, regardless of any changes in ownership. Pet registration is **free** for people who adopt a rescue pet from council pounds, animal shelters and rehoming organisations, to help ensure more dogs and cats find a forever home. If you fail to register your cat when required to do so you may be issued with a fixed penalty notice of \$330, or a court may award a maximum penalty of up to \$5500.

To register your cat,

1. Wait for an updated **Certificate of Identification** from council confirming that you are now recorded as the owner.
  - a. Please check that it states the cat is 'sold from an eligible pound/shelter' and as 'desexed' before paying the registration fee. If it doesn't, please contact us.
  - b. If after one month you have not received the **Certificate of Identification**, contact your local council directly to provide a copy of the Change of Owner (C3B) form that was completed at the time of adoption, or contact us.
2. Make payment of \$0 by either of the following ways:
  - a. Online at NSW Pet Registry [www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au](http://www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au) – by creating a profile (i.e. registering an account as a pet owner), linking your pet's microchip record to your profile, then selecting the registration payment option.

Further information about how to use the Registry is available on the OLG website at [www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-cats/information-for-professionals/information-for-breeders/](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/dogs-cats/information-for-professionals/information-for-breeders/).

The registry also allows you to update your cats' name/other pertinent details, your contact details, and report missing pets.

- b. Over the counter at your local council
- c. Over the counter or online at Service NSW





# MY CAT'S HEALTH DETAILS

## VACCINATION

Vaccination papers for your cat are enclosed. Adult cats should be vaccinated annually.

Your cat was last vaccinated on \_\_\_\_\_ with a Feline 3 in 1 vaccination or FVRCP. This is a multi vaccination and protects your cat against **Feline** Panleukopenia Virus (a.k.a. **Feline** Distemper), **Feline** Herpes virus and **Feline** Calicivirus – the last two are **feline** respiratory infections.

The next annual vaccination is **due** \_\_\_\_\_.

Kittens under 16 weeks come with 2 FVRCP vaccinations and due dates are on the vaccination papers.

## TESTING FOR FIV/FelV

All DoggieRescue cats are tested at 16 weeks for FIV/FelV and if positive it will be advised on the website.

## FLEAS and HEARTWORM

Flea control throughout the year is the most effective way to reduce the flea population explosion during summer months. But fleas can manifest all year round in cats. Fleas are hard to find in a cat's fur but their poo is easily seen. If you see tiny black dots on their fur or bedding or your bed or lounge, and your cat is scratching, she/he has fleas even if you don't think so.

Your new cat has been treated with \_\_\_\_\_ and was last treated on \_\_\_\_\_ and is **due** for the next treatment on \_\_\_\_\_. It is administered monthly, for life.

If you forget to administer this treatment, and your cat gets infested with fleas, give them a Capstar tablet, available from any pet store and adult fleas will die within 30 minutes. To get rid of the eggs, wash the cat with a flea wash shampoo and wash all their bedding and toys. You might have to flea bomb your house.

## GASTROINTESTINAL WORMS (including Tapeworm)

At your cat's annual vaccination check-up at a vet, the vet will recommend they be given a gastrointestinal worming tablet. At other times, if you notice worms in your cat's poo or around their anus, give them a Milbemax Broad-Spectrum All wormer Tablet available from any good pet store. Use a pill popper if you are not comfortable holding the cat's jaw open and dropping the tablet in the mouth to the back of the throat. If you put the tablet in food, the cat will eat the food and potentially leave the tablet.

## TICKS

If you keep your cat inside it is unlikely they will get a tick and if they do they will likely eat it when they groom unless it is attached inside the mouth, ears or behind their head where they can't reach. You can administer Bravecto every 3 months if you feel your cat needs Tick Protection.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TICK POISONING

## PREVENTION

- do a daily search of your cat, feeling with the fingertips, paying attention to the head, neck and shoulder areas, in the mouth, inside the ears;
- if you wish, treat your cat regularly during the worst months of the year, spring and early summer, with a good tick prevention medication that includes protection against paralysis ticks.

**IF A TICK IS FOUND ON YOUR CAT – TAKE YOUR CAT TO THE VET IMMEDIATELY.** There are instructions on the Internet on how to remove a tick but it is easy to leave part of the tick in the wound and if you are not comfortable removing it, take your cat to the vet immediately.

## SYMPTOMS

The earliest signs are the same in cats and dogs - dullness, vomiting, change in vocalisations, difficulty breathing, soon followed by a tremble in the hind legs and unsteady walking. If left untreated this loss of control extends up the spine to affect the front legs, then the neck muscles causing paralysis, and finally the breathing centre in the hindbrain is paralysed. The swallowing ability of the cat is often affected, so that food, fluids or medicine given by mouth usually finish up in the lungs causing the secondary symptoms such as pneumonia, dehydration, heart failure and these are usually the cause of death. If your cat displays any of the above symptoms – **TAKE YOUR CAT TO YOUR VET IMMEDIATELY.**

In Sydney there are 24-hour, 7 days per week, emergency vet clinics/hospitals at:

Northside Emergency Hospital Terrey Hills (02) 9452 2933    SASH at Nth Ryde (02) 9889 0289

Animal Referral Hospital Homebush (02) 9758 8666                      North Shore Vet Hospital (02) 9436 1213

Sydney Veterinary Emergency Rosebery (02) 9197 5800                      Sydney Uni Hospital Camperdown (02) 9351 3437

Animal Referral Hospital Baulkham Hills (02) 9639 7744                      SASH Central Coast (02) 4311 1311

## TREATMENT

Once **paralysis** occurs the animal is likely to die unless it is **treated** quickly with anti-**tick** serum injected by a vet. It still takes 48 hours for the toxin to be removed so your cat **can** continue to deteriorate.

**With adequate vigilance you can avoid tick poisoning in your pet, and the expensive treatment necessary to save its life.**

## FEEDING

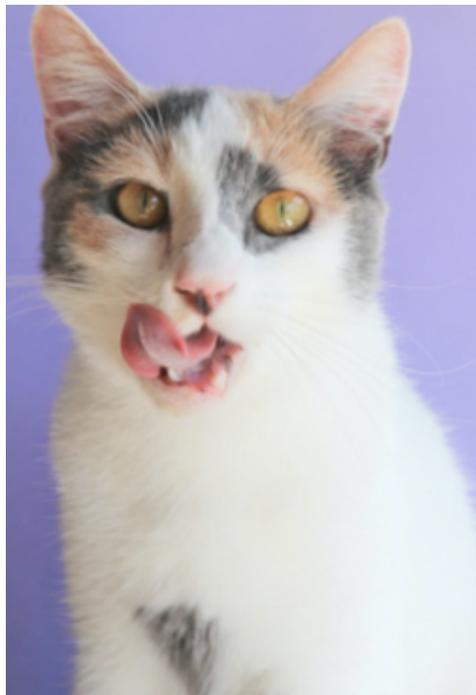
We feed our adult cats once a day in the morning (because of the number of cats and dogs we have plus we depend 100% on help from volunteer feeders). We feed our cats cooked chicken and raw kangaroo mince. This is also supplemented with wet packet food and dry food. We also suggest raw chicken necks in a home environment.

Feeding a high-quality food is an investment in your cat's health. Spending a bit more now might well save you the cost of veterinary visits in the future. In general, supermarket brands are of lower quality than those found at pet supply stores. Higher quality foods are more expensive, but because they contain more nutrients, less is fed per meal, so it balances out. And because the body is able to absorb more nutrients, less waste is produced!

To switch from one food to another, do it gradually over the course of a week. Add in more of the new food little by little as you decrease the amount of the old.

### **How often should I feed my cat?**

Feed your cat twice a day in an established routine, in a quiet place away from human traffic inside your house. After thirty minutes, remove any uneaten food. Don't free-feed your cat as this can lead to obesity and it can turn the cat into an obsessive eater. If you have a dog, feed your cat on a cupboard bench-top to stop the dog stealing it. After all, in a cat's mind, all things belong to cats so nothing in your house is sacred and they are going to jump up on cupboards anyway, particularly when you are preparing food. You can't train a cat like you train a dog: cat obedience is a challenge – but you're the one being trained.



# WHAT NOT TO FEED YOUR CAT

## TOXIC FOOD

Many common 'people' foods are actually harmful or can even be fatal to cats. Use this list as a guide as to what NOT to feed your cat but there are others on the Internet:

- Chocolate and caffeinated drinks; onions, shallots, garlic; raw eggs and raw bones (chicken necks are okay); alcohol; raw dough; milk for humans; grapes and raisins.
- Dog food is also dangerous as it doesn't have sufficient protein and nutrients required for a cat.

## TOXIC PLANTS

Many toxic plants, and cut flowers in vases, are irritants: they cause localized inflammation of the skin, mouth, stomach, etc. The toxic principle in other plants may have a systemic effect and damage or alter the function of a cat's organs, like the kidney or heart and lead to death. For example: all types of lilies including Madonna Lilies, azaleas, daffodils, poinsettias and hyacinth.

For a full list, go to <https://www.purina.com.au › Cats › Care › Toxic-Plants>

If the plant affects the organs you will notice: difficulty breathing (if the airways are affected); drooling or difficulty swallowing (if the mouth, throat or *oesophagus* is affected); vomiting (if the stomach or small intestines are affected); diarrhoea (if the small intestines or colon are affected); excessive drinking and urinating (if the kidneys are affected); fast, slow or irregular heart beat and weakness (if the heart is).

## TOXIC SUBSTANCES

The following substances are commonly found around the home or in your neighbourhood. Great care should be taken at all times to keep your cat from coming into contact with the following substances:

"1080" fox baits; anti-freeze; cigarettes and nicotine; cleaning products; fertiliser; insecticide; lead and products or items containing lead; paracetamol ("Panadol"); petrol; paint thinner; prescription medication (unless prescribed by a veterinarian, specifically for your cat); rat bait (or rats who have died from rat poison); and, snail bait. If your cat has swallowed or inhaled any of these poisons it is important that you contact your veterinarian immediately to arrange treatment.

# TOP FIVE POINTS TO SETTLE IN YOUR NEW CAT

## 1. BE PREPARED

If you can, wash the blankets and carry case lining and SLEEP with them in your bed for a night or two so they smell of you when you put your cat in the cage so that your new cat can start to feel secure in you. Have everything ready at home in a “safe room” or “safe area” (i.e. your bedroom, your ensuite/bathroom, living area). It must be an area that can be closed off where your cat will spend the first few days. It must be a room where you spend most of your time but where other pets don't have access for a few days. The window must stay closed. The room must have safe, accessible hiding places (e.g. under a lounge chair, under your bed). Have ready a water bowl with fresh water, food bowl ready for food, 2 kitty litter trays, scratching posts, toys, bed (but they might use the carry cage as a bed at first). Or, get the room ready *before* you take the cat out of the carry cage when you get home. Remove all breakables or anything dangerous from this room. When you take your cat into this room for the first time, leave her/him in the cat cage for about 30 minutes so she/he can listen and smell their new home and stay with them and talk to them. When you open the door, do not force them to come out, let them leave the cat cage when they are ready. When they do, show them where the kitty litter trays are. Give them some food. If you are going to change the cat's name, start using it from day one. On the second day they are home, if there are no other pets in the house, you can give them access to the entire house and have two kitty trays where they will permanently be located. After a few days, take the kitty trays out of the “safe room”. Keep the cat inside for at least a week (but we recommend forever) so that she/he learns that it's home.

## 2. GIVE YOUR CAT TIME! BEING ADOPTED IS STRESSFUL

Your new cat will be very unsure and apprehensive for a few days. They might not eat for the first 24 hours. Don't worry. They may be quiet, certainly will be jumpy, may cry and shiver, have weepy eyes, be constipated or not pass urine for several hours, so stay with them in their safe room and give them reassurance and cuddle them at their own pace. Do not let small children nor visitors handle your new cat for three or four days. Avoid wearing perfume, strong deodorants, hair gel or aftershave and the like for the first week as this may affect them until they are used to the smells of you and your house.

If necessary, there is a plug-in **Pheromone Spray** diffuser on the market that will help relieve stress. Also, Catnip (which some people think is a stimulant) is a relaxant that can help to relieve stress.



### 3. INTRODUCING YOUR CAT TO OTHER PETS IN THE HOUSE

It's important to understand firstly that cats care about their place in the home **physically**, whereas dogs care about their place **socially**. **If you are introducing your cat to another cat**, it's best not to adopt a female cat if you already have a female cat at home. A female cat is the queen of her territory and an established cat *may* never accept another female, not even a kitten. **If you are introducing your cat to a dog**, once the cat realizes the social side is what the dog is after, they tend to settle and can work out the relationship.

Cats need to be introduced slowly to other pets because if they are not and they don't like each other, they will fight and may never get over this encounter and will never be friends. When you take your new cat home, keep them separated from other pets by a door so that they can smell each other and hear each other. It's no good having a child gate separating them as cats will jump over it. You could also feed them on either side of the door so they can smell each other and smell that the other cat is eating the same food.

**If you are introducing your cat to another cat**, a few days after you've come home, carry your old cat into your new cat's safe room and let them look at each other from a distance of about three metres. Talk to them. If there is no hissing, but they are curious, meowing or purring, both of them, bring them closer and let them touch noses, otherwise don't. Your new cat might approach but your old cat might hiss. This first visit shouldn't be more than about 10 minutes, and do it several times a day, for longer times on the successive days and maybe try feeding them together with the food bowls at opposite ends of the room. Keep doing this, extending the time of the visits, until all is calm. Introducing a female to a male and vice versa will be easier and faster. After a few days, switch the cats' locations i.e. old cat goes into new cat's "safe room" with the door closed, and new cat is given access to the rest of the house. This way they get used to each other's smells. Don't forget to switch the kitty trays. It might take a week or so and then you can leave the "safe room" door open. But, sometimes it takes much longer. Never leave the two cats on alone together during this introduction time. If you go to work, leave your new cat in her/his safe room.

**If you are introducing your cat to a dog**, on the second day, walk your dog on a loose lead into the cat's safe room and if you act calm and have a "see it's just a cat, nothing to worry about" attitude the dog will pick up on this. If the dog is food motivated use food rewards for any time the dog looks at the cat and remains calm. If the dog is reactive by barking or carrying on, take him/her out of the room where all the fun and treats are going on. If the dog reacts, say "silly boy, now we have to leave the room" and take him out on the lead. When the dog calms down outside the room, you and the dog can re-enter the room, the dog getting food rewards for keeping the calm behaviour or if he reacts then out of the room he goes again until he begins to understand that reacting gets him nowhere. Always give the cat a safe spot it can dash to where the dog cannot get to i.e. to the top of its scratching tree. Cats like to observe from a safe spot.

Since dogs and cats use different body language to communicate it can be confusing to the opposite species to work out what the other one is about. For example, when a dog holds one front paw up this is to indicate they mean no harm and would like to be friends, whereas in the cat world a paw up is threatening so it will take them awhile to work out what the other animal actually means.

Another way to do the introduction of the new cat to a dog, is through a baby gate (obviously make sure the dog cannot scale the gate and get to the cat.) Doing it this way allows the cat to enter the dog's premises at its own pace while also being able to flee back to its safe spot if it needs to do so. Food rewards should be used for rewarding the dog when the cat gets close if the dog hasn't reacted. Give lots of praise for the dog when he does the correct behaviour. If the dog is reacting to the cat (while doing the intro through the baby gate), ignore the behaviour, then when the dog settles and is behaving quietly/calmly praise the dog for this behaviour so they are learning that to act calmly towards the cat gets them attention, praise, food rewards.

Doing some training exercises like sit, drop, high 5, in the presence of the cat at a distance is also a good way to help the dog relax and focus on something other than the cat. Giving the dog adequate exercise and play time means the dog will not need to 'chase the cat' for fun.

For the first couple of weeks while the dog and cat are getting used to each other, never leave them alone together. Always keep them separated while you are out to ensure consistent training. Puppies are usually harder to introduce as they are so happy and playful - making it fun for the pup but scary and threatening to the cat. Always supervise the pup with the cat at the start until the pup learns its boundaries with the cat.

## 4. KITTY LITTER

If you already have a cat at home you'll have to keep to the same brand of kitty litter the first cat is used to. Being the cat person you are, you know it is very hard to change a cat's habit. Also, because of the "safe room" regime, you'll need 4 trays if you already have a cat at home (A single cat needs two trays; two cats need three; three cats need four). When your new cat is ready to leave her/his "safe room", if the two cats are getting on superbly, you may want the trays together in the laundry or a bathroom. You'll need to show your new cat where they are and it may take her/him a little while to work it out. If she/he has an accident, don't be hard on them – just show them where they should have gone. If you have a double-storey house, you could keep with 4 trays – 2 in the upstairs bathroom, 2 in laundry downstairs.

If anything is going to stress out your cat, it is dirty kitty litter. Cats are fastidious. Some neurotic cat people (and cat boarding facilities) totally change all litter every time a cat goes to the toilet. They will wash/scrub the trays with detergent, dry them, spray them with FS10 and put clean kitty litter in the tray. (FS10 is a veterinarian's product for killing germs, available on the Internet). But practically, some people will scoop out the poop and leave the litter for another use. Some people think that a cat will wee twice in the same litter. He or she might. It's trial and error.

Be assured. The cat or cats will let you know if they are not happy with *your* level of cleanliness. They will poop where you will see it i.e. near a door, in the bath. There is nothing wrong with the cat if it does this (unless it is sick – diarrhoea, or blood in its poop, or worms – and it knows you are not clever enough to work it out so she/he has to show you in the hope you will take action to help her/him get well again). So, if they are pooping where they shouldn't, assess what YOU are doing wrong.

If you are not using FS10 or a safe diluted disinfectant to sterilise the kitty litter trays, then once a week they need to be thoroughly washed with detergent and left in the sun for a couple of hours.



## 5. READING YOUR CATS BODY LANGUAGE



# The 3 Days, 3 Weeks, 3 Months Rule of Adopting a Rescue Cat

The 3-3-3- rule is a general guideline, every cat is unique and will adjust differently. Give your cat space and allow them to go at their own pace.

## 3 Days

In the first 3 days...

- Must be kept in a Safe Room
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Unsure of unfamiliar smells
- May not want to eat
- May not use the kitty litter
- Shut down and may hide (under the bed)
- Meowing to protest and to get attention.



## 3 Weeks

After 3 weeks...

- Starting to settle in
- Feeling more comfortable
- Not hiding: out from under the bed
- Responding to your affection
- Learning her routine
- Chosen favourite spots in the house
- Chosen favourite toys
- Eating well



## 3 Months

After 3 months....

- Running the house
- Accepted you completely
- Enjoying play and exercise time with you
- Lap sitting
- May want to be trained on a harness to explore outside

