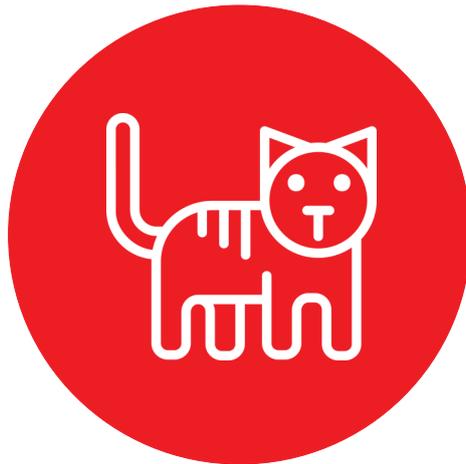




## Houstraining Your New Kitten



PETVET clinics are well-equipped, full-service, small animal veterinary practices providing comprehensive diagnostic, medical, surgical and dental care. We aim to offer quality service, giving your pet the maximum opportunity to lead a long and happy life.

ALL THE CARE YOUR PET NEEDS!



### **Do I need to train my new kitten to use a litter box?**

Cats by nature use soil for elimination. By providing a litter box with an appropriate and appealing material, most cats do not need to be trained to use it. At about 30-36 days of age kittens leave the nest to search out a suitable toilet area. The kitten learns specific areas and materials to use by observation of its mother.

### **Is there anything that I need to do to aid this process?**

It is important that the kitten be confined to a small area with an appropriate sized litter box. This allows you to take advantage of a cat's tendency to eliminate in a loose material. As long as the kitty litter is the only loose material available, and especially if it is the same as it used at its previous home, very little effort should be required to litter box train the kitten. About the only other indoor area that might appeal to a number of cats is the soil around house plants. Prevented kittens from getting into house plants should solve this problem. Kittens will need to eliminate after they eat, after they wake up and after play. At those times place the kitten in its litter-box and praise her for elimination. A kitten does not need to be confined continuously, but should be supervised to prevent accidents and frequently brought back to the appropriate elimination location.

### **What type of litter material should I use?**

There are many types of litter materials available today. These include plain clay litters, fine "clumping" litters, recycled newspapers and many others. Some have materials added to control odour. The type you choose is up to you. Continuing with the kitty litter used in the first home is helpful.

### **What size and type of litter box should I buy?**

The size of the litter box should be determined by the size of the kitten or cat. A very small kitten may need a box with low sides for easier access. As the kitten grows, a larger box may be more appropriate. Some owners prefer litter boxes with covers on them.

### **Where should I put the litter box?**

The litter box should be placed in a location that is easily accessed by the cat, yet out of the way. Avoid congested household areas. The cat should have some privacy and quiet to eliminate. Laundry and bathrooms are often used, but be sure that noise from household equipment is not disruptive and aversive to your cat. Try to put the litter box in an area that is convenient for you to check on and keep clean. Do not put food and water bowls right next to the litter box. If there are dogs in the home, then the litter box should be located where the cat can eliminate without being bothered by them.

### **How often should I clean the litter box?**

Cats are very fastidious animals, and they generally like a clean place to eliminate. Faecal material should be removed on a daily basis, whether the litter material type is clumping or plain. For clumping materials daily or every other day removal of urine material is recommended. Remember, each cat is an individual, your cat may like more frequent cleaning of the litter box to maintain good usage patterns. Some cats dislike the odour of the cleansers used to clean litter boxes, so rinse the box thoroughly after each cleaning.

### **How many litter boxes do I need in my home?**

The number of litter boxes depends on the number of cats, the size of the home, the temperament of the cat, and other pets in the home. When there are multiple cats, multiple pans should be available in different locations. Because there can be varied interactions between individuals, multiple boxes in multiple locations allow house-mates to avoid one another if they so choose. In general, there should be at least one litter box per cat, and some behaviourists advise one more box than the number of cats in the house.



### What if the kitten does not use its litter box?

Should the kitten begin to eliminate in locations other than its litter box, first review the steps above.

-  Is the litter in an area that is appealing and easily accessed by the cat?
-  Is there anything in the area that may be a deterrent?
-  Is the litter box being cleaned often enough?
-  Are there enough litter boxes for the number of cats?

To determine the most appealing litter for your cat, offer two or more different litters in the same type of box, side-by-side and see which one, if any, the cat uses most frequently. Next, determine the type of litter box the cat prefers by offering two or more litter box types side-by-side. You can determine the cat's preferred location by offering the preferred litter box with the preferred litter in two or more locations and determining which one the cat uses more frequently.

### Notes

#### CLINIC LOCATIONS

**PETVET Lower Hutt**  
70 Pharazyn Street, Melling  
Lower Hutt 5010

**PETVET Silverstream**  
9 Kiln Street, Silverstream  
Upper Hutt 5019  
+64 4 5277552