



 (852) 6464 2908

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  TAILS Lantau

## CAT CARE BASICS

Thank you for giving your time, attention and love to one of our rescue cats. Here's a brief refresher on basic cat care. Please get in touch with any concerns or questions.

We are happy to offer support!

### DIET

There are various reputable types and brands of food available that provide a healthy, balanced diet for our cats. Cats are carnivores, which means they derive their nutrients from a meat-based diet. Typically, cats can be fed frequent small meals throughout the day, but this may vary with age, activity level, health, and other factors. Here are a few things that can be **dangerous and deadly** to cats that you should **not** feed: Chocolate, raisins, grapes, onions, garlic, cooked bones, xylitol (artificial sweetener, in some processed foods). Other things that are poisonous to cats can include plants, such as lilies, hyacinths, chrysanthemums, poinsettia, mistletoe, tulips, rhododendron, fertilizers, herbicides, and bleach. These lists are not exhaustive; if you are unsure about other foods, plants or chemicals, please check with your vet. All cats should have constant access to fresh water.

### EXERCISE & NATURAL BEHAVIOURS

Cats need to get regular daily exercise. Cat trees are particularly valuable for allowing cats to practice their climbing and balancing skills. Scratching posts can help our cats practice their natural behaviours of not only using their claws, but also letting them mark their territory by rubbing their scent against them. Besides, they are a good way to provide for our cats' needs while keeping our furniture scratch-free! Toys are further great for stimulating our cats' hunting instinct and making sure they get lots of exercise. Note that cats may be active during dawn and dusk – in the wild, cats hunt their prey while staying out of sight from predators in these hours. Cats can also spend a lot of the day sleeping – an average of 15 hours a day.

### SAFE SPACE

Cats need calm areas they deem safe and comfortable to withdraw to when they want to rest. Many cats enjoy small cubby holes, dark places and even boxes to climb into. Be aware that cats may be where you least expect them: hiding under your blankets, under the couch, in your drawers. Before closing doors, check whether the cats have snuck in as they often move silently.

### OUTDOOR SPACE

Many of our rescue cats are not equipped to deal with the dangers of Hong Kong, such as busy traffic, snakes, rat poison, free-roaming dogs etc. We recommend to limit our cats to indoor space only. Please be aware that cats are skilled at escaping through small window openings and off balconies, and ensure that your home is 'cat-proof'. Especially in high rises, this limits the risk of unnecessary suffering or death.

### LITTERBOX

Most cats naturally use a litterbox with cat litter to do their business. It is important that this cleaned and maintained at least daily. Many cats prefer an enclosed litterbox that 'hides them' while they pee/poo. In homes with several cats, each cat ideally can have their own litter tray, located in a quiet, calm space. There are various types of cat litter available for purchase that can suit our cats' needs.



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## **GROOMING**

Cats should be groomed regularly to reduce the amount of fur spread across our homes. Many cats enjoy gentle, steady brush strokes, which can simulate cat grooming amongst themselves. This can help to strengthen our bond with our cats. Over time, our cats may feel relaxed enough to let us also check ears, mouth and paws, which can help us identify health issues early on.

## **HEALTH**

At the age of 8 and 12 weeks, kittens are recommended to receive their FVRCP vaccination, followed by an annual booster vaccine and health check. Cats are further recommended to receive regular prevention against fleas, ticks, and parasites. These can be given at home on a monthly basis or as recommended by your vet. It is our policy that all our rescue animals are de-sexed at 5-6 months of age.

## **SOCIALIZATION**

Even though cats are considered comfortable as loners, it is nice for cats to have other cats to play with and socialize. Cats should **not** be left alone, caged or tied up for long periods of the day: This can make them feel anxious and lonely. Instead, we may take the time to get to know our cats, and learn their language, likes and dislikes. Cats commonly enjoy being able to decide to join us when they feel like being social, and withdraw when suits them. Respecting the boundaries our cats set can make our relationship a positive, understanding, and loving one.

## **TRAINING**

People often do not associate training with cats, but as any animal, cats can be trained with treats and positive conditioning. This can be fun and enhance our relationship with our feline friends. Further, it can make some situations less stressful. For example, if you can train your cat to let you exam their ears and mouth or to feel calm in a crate, vet visits may be a lot less stressful.