

# MOGGIES FOSTER GUIDE



## Welcome Moggies Mummas (and Poppas)!

As we are entirely foster based, we rely on a network of homes to nurture and rehabilitate your foster animals until they are ready for adoption.

This guide takes you through the basics of foster care with the rescue. Please take the time to read over it.

Whenever in doubt, reach out!

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## What's included?

### Foster set up

A fabric pen or crate, bedding, toys, scratcher and carrier is on hand to start your kittens off in a safe, contained space.

### Food

Both dry and wet food is available from the rescue.

**Note: we encourage the bulk of their diets as dry food (cat kibble) and use wet food for treats and specialised cases.**

### Litter

1-2 weeks worth of litter is provided to get you started with each new set of foster kittens.

Top ups are available to those who need them most.

### Flea/worm treatments

All kittens/cats come flea/wormed. Treatments and training is providing for animals in foster care.

### Vet cover

Medical treatment at our partner clinics is covered.

**Note: All booking are made through the Moggies team. Please contact us at the first sign of illness. If in doubt, reach out!**

### Running low on supplies?

Try to give our team a heads up of 3 or more days. This gives us time to organise supplies and a pick up point.

# Getting Started.

## First time foster parents.

Read and sign the Foster form.

Join the Foster's Facebook group.

Read over the guide.

Ask questions if there's anything you're not sure about!

Do your best :)

## Returning foster parents.

Wash and sanitise supplies between litters.

Restock on perishables (food, litter, worm/flea treatments).

Remember every litter is different!

## Provide a safe, nurturing & clean environment.

We recommend starting each litter off in a pen, crate or spare room and slowly adjusting them to the family's lifestyle and daily routine.

Give them more freedom when they are:

- Settled and in good health
- Confidently using their litterbox
- Will come when called/are easily handled

**Note: All foster animals are to be kept inside!**

### When can I introduce them to the resident pets?

Before introductions, we recommend your animals be in:

- Good general health,
- Up-to-date with their vaccinations & flea/worm treatments
- Able to be supervised

**Start interactions by sharing scents (with bedding, interaction on either side of a door) and progress to supervised interactions.**

## Treat them like family.

**Spend time with your foster animals where ever possible to prepare them for their forever homes.**

- Introduce them to a range of people
- Expose them to day to day chores like vacuuming, dishes, tv etc.
- Create a routine for them that works with your schedule. E.g. Food and play around workhours.

## Be patient.

**As a general rule, healthy, well adjusted animals take 3 days to settle. 3 weeks to learn a routine. 3 months to feel at home.**

# Kitten Proofing.

## Toys for enrichment

Kittens have lots of energy to burn! Use toys, scratching posts and towers to focus their energy and urge to play!

**Discourage unwanted habits like jumping on tables/benches, climbing curtains and biting/scratching hands by redirecting with the appropriate alternative.**

## Food

AVOID human food! Their digestive systems are very different to our own. What may seem harmless can cause huge upset.

## Close Windows & Doors

Block off all possible escape routes. Pay particular attention to doors and windows below shoulder height and block access to the underneath of beds, couches and behind appliances.

## Remove Hazards

Remove plastic, tools, string, cables, low hanging plants etc. **Cover anything that could detach and present as a shock or choking hazard.**

## Plants

Many can be toxic. Remove low lying plants or place above shoulder level. For large plants with exposed soil, place river stones in the base to discourage digging and toileting.

# FOOD

## Dry food

Dry food makes up the bulk of your kittens calories and is able to be left out during the day to be 'grazed' on.

Best practice is to store extra dry food in a sealed container, away from direct sunlight. Replenish biscuits when their bowl is empty and discard any uneaten dry food after 24 hours.

80%  
DIET

## Wet food

Is a secondary source of calories. Use it mainly for underweight fosters, for kittens 4-12 weeks and as a food incentive or reward.

Depending on size/condition, 2-4 tablespoons per kitten is ideal. See middle column. Discard any uneaten wet food that changes in smell, texture or colour. On a hot day, this could be in an little as an hour.

20%  
DIET

## Water

Fresh water should be available at all times. Refill daily and replace whenever soiled.

100%  
AVAILABLE AT  
ALL TIMES

## Underweight.



Characterised by little body fat, low muscle mass, bones protruding and a hollowed waist.

### Focus on:

- Simple, easy to digest foods
- Smaller meals, more often. Frequency decreasing with appetite and improved health
- Calorie and nutrient dense food
- Access to biscuits if comfortable 'grazing'
- Probiotics
- Rest

## Overweight.



Characterised by excess fat covering the majority of body, a waist wider than rib cage and excess skin.

### Focus on:

- Regulated feeding
- Foods that promote satiety
- Probiotics
- Play and physical enrichment

## Maintenance.



Characterised by evenly distributed body fat, a balanced waist and no bones protruding.

- Free feed biscuits
- Wet food to supplement diet or as a treat

# Specialty Foods

## Weaning

To transition neonatal kittens from milk to solids, use:

- Kitten mousse
- Nutritionally dense puree'd food
- A 'porridge' of specialised kitten milk and meat

**Stay away from cow's milk, 'pet' milk or 'game' meats.**

## Diarrhoea & Constipation

To help regulate soft or hard stools in:

**Mild cases** (1-2 days since onset), sub in

- Plain, cooked chicken (breast is best)
- 1 TBL pumpkin puree mixed into wet food
- Homemade/plain chicken broth
- Probiotics

**Moderate cases**

- Gastro friendly mousse and or biscuits

**Identify trigger. Make sure worming is up to date. Temporarily remove all newly introduced foods.**

## Vomitting

For vomiting:

- Remove heavy and fat rich food, simple is best
- Prepare smaller portions/finer pieces

**Not sure? Give us a heads up!**

**If it happens once, monitor. If it happens twice, contact the team.** Contact your foster co ordinator ASAP for blood, tarry stools and unexplained loss of appetite.

# THE SCOOP on POOP

## Toileting is a key indicator of digestion, gut health and parasite load.

Many of our animals come from less than ideal backgrounds so toileting is used as a measure to help track their general health and identify possible underlying conditions.

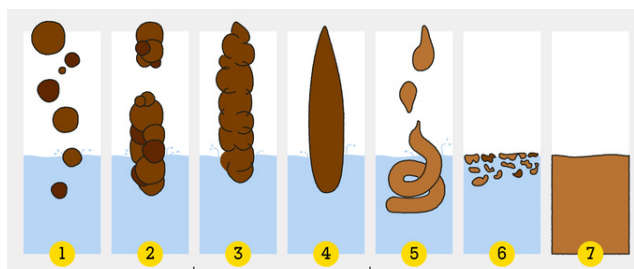
Food intolerances, stress, gut health, bacteria imbalance and parasites are all common causes for digestive upset.

## Frequency.

Although there is no solid rule for a normal schedule, it's generally considered a 'healthy habit' in cats/kittens to pass stool once or twice daily. No bowel movement for more than two days is considered cause for concern, as is sudden change in routine.

Please familiarise yourself with the chart and keep the team informed with anything outside of the realm of healthy habits!

## Stool Chart



- 1** Hard, separate pellet like lumps that are difficult to pass.
  - 2** Lumpy, sausage shaped stool. Body of stool is made of separate parts.
- 
- Constipation**
- 3** Sausage shaped stool with cracks on the surface. Body of stool is largely in one piece.
  - 4** Sausage shaped stool that is smooth and soft.
- 
- Diarrhoea**
- 5** Blobs that are soft and easy to pass. Soft serve consistency.
  - 6** Mushy stools with no form. Both solid and liquid stool may be present
  - 7** Entirely liquid, no solid pieces.

## Colour Chart



**Brown:** Healthy cat poop is usually dark brown. That's a sign that your cat's body is absorbing the necessary nutrients from their food as it works its way through the digestive tract.

**Black:** This color might mean that your cat is bleeding into their gastrointestinal tract. If you notice black, tarry poop, contact your foster team as soon as possible .

**Stool with red streaks:** A red tint, or blood in your cat's stool may be a sign that your pet is bleeding in their lower gastrointestinal tract. Common causes are straining, parasites and stress.

**Yellow cat/light brown:** This colour points to digestive issues, bacteria/parasites.

**Green:** Generally associated with gallbladder/ digestive issues.

**Stool with white spots:** This is a common sign of intestinal parasites (worms). Depending on the parasite, it can look like solid white specks (worm eggs), rice segments (tapeworms) or spaghetti (roundworms).

**White/very pale:** White or pale stools are a serious issue, usually accompanied by lethargy, vomiting, or a lack of appetite. Contact your foster team as soon as possible.

# What else to look for

## Mucus in stool

Among many important roles, mucus is used to line the intestines and aide stool passing through.

**Mucus in stools points to inflammation.**

## Straining/discomfort

Characterised by:

- Discomfort while passing stool/urinating
- Longer periods in the litterbox
- No stool/urine after session
- Excessive digging in the litterbox

## Dark urine

Dark yellow, red or strong smelling urine is a sign of dehydration and has the potential for underlying issues. **Urine that is pale/light yellow is the ideal.**

## Eating litter

This is a common behaviour seen in cats with digestive upsets. Note that ingesting litter can also be common in younger kittens as they explore their world through taste and texture. This should be discouraged and is usually remedied by changing the litter type & addressing possible digestive issues.

## Possible causes

These are common factors to keep these in mind when sudden changes occur. Keeping a record of these will help us in identifying the cause.

- **Stress**
- **Change in food/water**
- **Parasite load**
- **Medication**
- **Ingesting a foreign body**

# Litter types

There are many types of litter available, each which its own strength and versatility.

TYPE	PROS	CONS
<p><b>Clay (non clumping)</b> Found in most super-markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most common</li> <li>• General use litter</li> <li>• Cheap</li> <li>• Great for tracking hydration (white clay)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular choice for 'litter eaters'</li> <li>• Average odour control</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pine pellets</b> Found in most hardware stores as 'firewood pellets'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General use litter</li> <li>• Cheap</li> <li>• Compostable</li> <li>• Good odour control</li> <li>• Discourages 'litter eaters'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messy</li> <li>• Harder to find in summer</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clay (clumping)</b> Found in most super-markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common</li> <li>• General use litter</li> <li>• Great for diarrhoea</li> <li>• Great odour control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle price range</li> <li>• Soiled litter gets stuck between paws</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recycled paper</b> Found at most petstores.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General use litter</li> <li>• Ecofriendly</li> <li>• Good odour control</li> <li>• Discourages 'litter eaters'</li> <li>• Easy clean up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle price range</li> <li>• Quickly soiled with older kittens</li> </ul>
<p><b>Crystal litter</b> Found at most super-markets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General use litter</li> <li>• Great odour control</li> <li>• Great for tracking hydration (white clay)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle price range</li> <li>• Popular choice for 'litter eaters'</li> <li>• Not ecofriendly</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tofu</b> Found at most petstores</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General use litter</li> <li>• Great odour control</li> <li>• Easy clean up</li> <li>• Ecofriendly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher price range</li> <li>• Harder to source</li> </ul>

# Litter tips and tricks

## As a general rule:

- Allow one box per room, two boxes available for litters of 3 +
- Replace litter when soiled
- Use one knuckle deep worth of litter to fill box
- Disinfect litterbox between changes

## Placement

**Use general, shallow boxes for:**

- Pens/crates
- Small and undercover spaces

**Use covered boxes for:**

- Odour control
- Shy kittens
- Kittens who play in litter!

## Encouragement

**If you kittes are unsure about using the litter box try these fixes:**

- Make sure litterbox is clean and accessible
- Try placing the litterbox in a covered, quiet low foot traffic place
- Sprinkle dirt on the top of the litter

## Bad habits

**For kittens who toilet outside of the box:**

- Restrict access outside of the pen/crate until the behaviour resolves
- If toileting in plants, place large river stones in the base
- If toileting under furniture, spray or soak cotton balls with strong smelling essential oils.

**If this behaviour is unusual, consider health, changes in environment and behavioural stressors.**

# General health checks

General health check are an important part of fostering.

**Contact your foster team if you see these symptoms!**

## Eyes

- Yellow or green discharge
- Redness
- Uneven pupil dilation
- Swollen eyelids
- Third eyelid present

## Ears

- Dark, flaky debris, especially in cats
- A yeasty smell
- Painful when rubbed or cleaned
- Frequent scratching at ear (more than 4 x daily)
- Head tilt favouring one side

## Nose

- Yellow or green discharge
- Bleeding from nose
- Excessive sneezing

## Mouth

- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Coughing and/or gagging
- Trouble eating or chewing
- Pale gums
- Ulcers or lacerations on gums or lips

## Toileting

- Diarrhoea - especially bloody or liquid stools
- Constipation - firm stool or no bowel movement for more than 48 hours
- No urination for more than 24 hours, especially in male cats

## Skin

- Discolouration
- Hairloss
- Scabbing
- Redness
- Flaking

**Note: Contact the team at the first sign of any skin related symptoms.**

## Movement

- Laboured or slow
- Unco-ordinated
- Limping

## Behaviour/stress

- Aggression
- Fear
- Toileting in inappropriate areas or urine spraying
- Excessive grooming
- Decreased appetite
- Lethargy
- Overally vocal

# Flea/worm schedule

**A consistant routine in your foster kitten's flea/worm schedule is important part of maintaining general health.**

## Flea treatment

Treat monthly, or as needed with signs of:

- Active fleas
- Recent flea dirt
- Excessive scratching



## Worming



As a general rule:

- Worm kittens aged 4 - 12 weeks every **two weeks**
- Worm kittens aged 13 - 52 weeks **monthly**
- Cats aged 1 year plus **1-3 monthly**

Dosage depends on age and weight.

**Contact the team if:**

- You run out of treatments
- There is evidence of blood or worms in stool
- You have difficulty worming your foster kittens
- They experience a negative reaction to the treatment

# Timeline

1 - 3 WEEKS

## Settling in

Allow for a 'settling period' where your fosters adjust to living in a new environment. Depending on health, history and age, this may be as little as 3 days for 'easy' cases and as long as 1-3 months for more 'challenging' cases.

2-6 WEEKS

## Adjustment and growth

Once settled into their foster home, the focus is on maintaining good health, socialisation and preparing them for their forever homes.

@10 WEEKS +

## Desexing

Desexing is booked when foster kittens are 1kg + (usually 10 weeks and older) and are in good health. The appointment is organised for a weekday that works with the foster parent's schedule. On the day, cats/kittens are also vaccinated, flead/wormed and microchipped.

## Adoption

Once healed from their operations, we start the adoption process to find a good fit.

Each foster is different and will move through the stages at their own pace. The average foster period is 2 - 6 weeks.

# Desex day

## Preparation:

**Call your foster team if you are not confident there have been no signs of illness in the previous 48 hours. Lethargy, loss of appetite, flu and change of behaviour are all symptoms to be mindful of.**

**Remove all accessible food the night before the operation.** The general rule is 'no food after dinner', or no food later than 10pm. Water is encouraged.

## Drop off

**Drop off is between**

**7.30am - 9am for Te Puke Vets**

**8am - 8.30am for Coastal Pet Vet**

**All animals must travel in a secured carrier.**

- For comfort, place a blanket with a familiar scent in, or over the carrier.
- For timid fosters, cover the carrier completely.
- Leave early enough to account for traffic
- Allow 10 minutes for admission once at the clinic.

## Pick up

**Pick up is generally between 3.30pm - 5.30pm**

- Advise staff if an earlier, or later pick up time is best
- Pass on a contact number
- Allow up to 10-15 minutes for pick up and a discussion with the nurse around aftercare.

# Aftercare

## Discuss with the nurse

The vet clinic will over the general information of aftercare but here are the key points to remember.

## Key points:

- Small meal the night of operation
- Use a surgery collar if picking or licking wound
- Some fosters are vey quiet, others are full of energy
- Males recover quicker than females
- Separate kittens if likely to play roughly
- Major healing period is the first 48 hours
- Avoid jumping and strenuous play for the week
- If stitches are external, remove after 10-14 days

## Watch for:

### Around the wound

- Redness or swelling
- Coloured discharge or bleeding from the woundsite
- The wound is open
- Any signs of infection

### In general

- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy 24 hours post op
- Flu symptoms
- Coughing/raspy breathing
- Blood in stool

**If in doubt, contact the team!**



# THE Adoption Process

## The General Process

Once a foster cat/kitten is near the adoption stage, we ask for photos and a description of their personality to find home that would suit them best.

### IN YOUR DESCRIPTION CONSIDER:

- Age (kitten, teenager, adult)
- Personality (three or more descriptors)
- Temperment (quiet, high energy etc.)
- If socialised with kids/other animals
- Quirks (what makes them special)
- Likes/dislikes (what makes them happy vs unsettled)

### TRY TO TAKE PHOTOS THAT ARE:

- In focus
- Have good lighting
- Kitten/cat is main subject
- No overpowering colours/object

### Tips for taking photos:

- Hold string/toy/treat above lense of camera
- Take photos in their downtime
- Regularly take photos/videos to find that 'magic moment'

## Types of Adoptions

### Pre adoptions

Pre-adoptions are adoptions where the foster cat/kitten is adopted into a home before they are desexed.

This happens most often for pairs and is a great option for families wanting to socialise foster kittens with existing animals at a younger age.

### Foster FAILS

Foster fails are when the foster parents adopts their cat/kitten. Foster fails are the best kind of happy ever afters!

As a perk of fostering, there is a reduced fee for adopting 'Foster Fails'.

### Foster trials/foster to adopt

In special cases, we offer an adoption trial to give our long term Moggies time to settle before a final decision is made.

It's a great way to see how existing animals adjust to new siblings.

## Where do adoptions happen?

### In the foster home

At home adoptions are where potential adoptive families arrange a meet & greet in the foster parent's home. It's a low stress way for our moggies to interact with new people and adoptive families to see how the kittens are in the comfort of a familiar space.

#### At home adoptions best suit:

- Timid cats/kittens
- Cats/kittens that do best one on one
- Cats/kittens that struggle with being enclosed
- Cats/kittens that struggle with travel

**NEWBIES! No kittens are taken home 'on the day' for first time adoptions:** Adoptions are finalised after contact has been made with the Moggies team to discuss how the meet & greet went, the paperwork process and the next steps.

### At an Adoption Day

Adoption days are usually held once or twice a month, at a pet store, vet clinic or participating business.

They are a great way to engage the community and find homes for multiple kittens on the day.

Foster parents are encouraged to attend to help speak to potential adopters.

#### Adoption days best suit:

- Confident kittens
- Young kittens
- Foster parents who aren't comfortable with viewings
- Foster parents who are short on time for viewings



# Adoption Day Prep

**Whether at Home Adoption or at an Adoption Day, follow these tips to set up for a successful meet & greet!**

## Do's

### Create a comfortable environment

- Arrange familiar scents (like bedding, toys) in adoption area
- Prepare toys and treats in advance
- Book a viewing for a time of day kittens are active and attentive (around meal times is best)

## Dont's

### Avoid activities that cause stress beforehand like:

- Vacuuming
- Moving furniture
- Using power tools
- Playing loud music

## Tips for Adoption Day

- Don't rush
- Cover the carrier on the way over
- Get there 10-15min early to help settle them in
- Bring treats/toys or bedding they're familiar with

## Tips for Home Adoptions

- Confident kittens/cats can start off in the main living space or a smaller space to begin with.
- Shier kittens are best in groups (mixed with confident kittens) or
- Starting off in a smaller space like a pen/crate
- Note: Avoid access to tight spaces such as beneath furniture or behind appliances.
- Allow for a longer visit (30min +)

## Is it the right fit?

**Finding the right fit is the most important factor in every adoption.**

We need to to be confident their adoptive home is in a position to take care of them long term and personalities/lifestyles compliment.

### Factors to consider include:

- Renting/home ownership
- A plan for if they're away from home short term (holiday) or long term (extended holiday, new rental etc.)
- Family dynamics - who is at home and how often?
- How did the fosters respond to to their potential adopters & vice versa

**We do the initial vetting but rely on our foster parents to speak up if they feel it isn't the right fit.**

Should their be any doubt, politely tell the adoptive family that the Moggies team will be in touch and report back to discuss the options.

# Checklist

## Adoption forms

**An adoption form must be read and signed before the cat/kittens leaves to their new home.** The adopter can either keep a hardcopy or take a photo of their signed form for their records. A hardcopy, or photo, must be kept in the rescue.

Some fosters keep a folder, other send through photos to their foster co ordinator.

## Payment

**Adoption fees keep the rescue sustainable.** Payment can be made via bank transfer or in cash. If bank transfer, please site or ask adoptive home to send a screenshot of payment.

## Vetbooks

**Pass these on with the cat/kitten.** Each contains a record or desexing, microchip number and history of flea/worm treatments.

## Takeaways

**If there is a certain toy or blanket that is cherished by the kitten/cat, consider passing it on.** Most foster supplies can be replaced, if it will help your cat/kitten settle in their environment consider lending, or gifting to their new home.

## Settling in Tips

**These are passed onto the adoptive home in the form of a print out or digital copy.** Generally, this done through the foster team but you can let the adoptive family know they will be provided.

# When to reach out

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## Weekly check in.

A week in the life of a kitten is a long time and we'd love to hear how you're going. Even if it's as simple as, 'we're all good here' and 'here's a few pictures', a check in keeps us on track with growth, resourcing and a timeline for adoption.

## When you're running low on supplies.

Try to give our team a heads up of 3 or more days. This give us time to organise supplies and a pick up point.

## If in doubt!

No question is a wrong question. If you're not sure about something, we'd love to hear from you!

# CONTACT

GIVE US A MEOW AT



**PHONE:** 027 781 7889



**SOCIALS:** Moggies - Homes for Cats & Kittens



**EMAIL:** [meow@mymoggies.com](mailto:meow@mymoggies.com)

Thank you  
for my second  
chance

