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# Your guide to cat ownership

Helping you find  
your perfect match



**woodgreen**

Helping pets and their people

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# What you need for your new arrival

**The lead up to bringing your new feline friend home is an exciting time, and there’s lots to get ready. Here’s a list of things you might need to prepare for the big day!**

## Cat food

Most of our cats are fed on a variety of meat in jelly, as well as Royal Canin biscuits, which you’ll receive a small bag of when you collect your cat to help them settle into the home.

## Two food bowls per cat

One each for wet and dry food.

## One water bowl per cat

Big enough for their whiskers to not touch the sides of the bowl.

## Litter trays

one per cat and an extra – we’ll let you know whether your cat prefers an open or covered litter tray.

## Cat litter

most cats are happy with any type of litter, but we’ll let you know if your new cat has a preference. For example, we use corn clumping litter which is favoured by some of our feline friends.



## Scratching posts

We'll explore this later on!

## Toys

it’s worth getting a variety. Keep reading to see some ideas.

## Enrichment feeder

Not essential, but it can be a great way of keeping your new cat entertained and relaxed.

## Safety release collar

For peace of mind, you may want your cat to wear a collar, but it’s not a legal requirement. All our cats are microchipped before they go to their new homes.

## Cat bed

This could be as simple as a blanket in a box, or nice sunny spot in the home.

## One large plastic cat carrier per cat

We’ve listed more information on cat carriers on [page 5](#).



## A few things to avoid:

### Scented litter and litter tray liners

Cats are sensitive to strong smells and may be put off using the tray. They also like to dig and scratch in litter trays and catching a liner on their claws can spook them.

### Laser pens

As fun as it is for your cat to chase, lasers don't give them anything to physically catch, which can leave your cat feeling frustrated.

### Harnesses and leads

We discuss why later on in this guide.

### Buckle and flea collars

Buckle collars aren't easy to escape from if it gets caught up. We recommend safety snap release collars. Flea collars are not as effective at preventing fleas like treatments prescribed by a vet.

### Bells on collars

A collar with a bell might seem like a good idea to warn local birds that your cat is nearby. But actually, your cat will learn to just be more silent and stealthy. Bells can also be quite annoying for your feline friend, especially with their sensitive hearing.



## Be in the know about cat carriers

Before you bring your new cat companion home, it's important to get clued up on how to travel safely with them. We recommend a large plastic carrier or a wire top loading carrier. These carriers have secure doors to prevent any escapees! Your cat carrier should also have plenty of space for them to comfortably move around in. Cats naturally feel safe in dark hiding spaces, so whenever they're in one, we recommend covering the cat carrier with a towel or blanket. This will help make them feel safe and secure while travelling. It will also prevent them from seeing everything that is going on around them, which they can find extremely stressful.

### Important things to know:

We want to make sure you have a safe journey home with your new cat, so make sure you have a suitable carrier. We wouldn't want you to wait any longer to welcome your furry feline to your home.

Your cat carrier should be secured while you're travelling, the best way of doing this is by placing it on the back seat and pulling the seatbelt through the handle.

Head over to our website for a step by step guide on how to train your cat to enter a carrier.

### Cat carriers to avoid

Steer clear of wicker and fabric cat carriers. These types of carriers do not provide enough space and air flow can be restricted. They're also not very easy to clean if your cat has an accident inside.



## Feeding your feline

**Feeding your cat a well-balanced diet will keep them in tip-top condition! There are lots of diet options out there, but we can help you pick the right one for your feline friend.**



Most of the cats in our care are fed twice a day on wet cat food and dry biscuits. We sometimes find they like to graze throughout the day. It's a good idea to spread their meals out when you can. Some cats will benefit from having smaller meals more often through out the day.

If you decide to switch out your cat's dry food to another brand, make sure all the biscuits are brown. Colourful biscuits tend to have a lot of added sugars and additives.

Some of our cats have a special diet depending on their age, weight, or whether they have any conditions. Our team will let you know what food your cat eats and if they have any special dietary requirements. One of our Pet Advisor's will let you know prior to rehoming what food your cat is currently eating, and whether there are any special dietary requirements.

### A couple of tips

**Did you know, it can be uncomfortable for some cats to eat and drink from bowls on the ground?** This can be particularly bothersome as they get older too. We suggest raising your cat's food and water bowl off the floor slightly so they can eat at a more comfortable, natural level.

### Ditch the bowl

Many cats benefit from and enjoy using enrichment feeders. This way of feeding encourages cats to work for their food, as they would in the wild. It can be as simple as hiding biscuits around the room, or creating a game to keep them occupied for longer.



**Lots of enrichment feeding ideas can be found on the pet advice section of our website.**

## Choosing the perfect room to settle your cat in

Before you bring your new cat home, it's a good idea to dedicate a room for them to settle in for the first 24 hours. A bedroom, office or spare room is your best bet, somewhere quiet with little comings and goings throughout the day. Your cat may need longer than 24 hours in the room before slowly introducing them to the rest of the home.

You can also watch our video on how to settle a cat:  
<https://youtu.be/7MvSE4TY71A>

The chosen room should be big enough for your cat to access everything they need, like food, water, litter tray and bed. Once your feline friend has completely settled into the house, you can gradually spread out their resources.

Giving your cat a few places to hide can help make them feel more safe and secure. Cardboard boxes make excellent hiding places, or by simply draping a large blanket over a chair, you have a cosy den. It can take longer for some cats to settle into their new environment than others. Confident cats may be happy enough to investigate the whole house when they first arrive.

Older cats may find it tricky to get around by jumping and climbing. Creating steps and graduated levels can make it easier for them to access those harder to reach areas. It will also help prevent them getting hurt.





## What is scent-marking?

Scent-marking is a cat's natural way of marking their territory to feel calm and safe. They may do this by rubbing up against furniture or scratching. If they don't have any other option, they may start toileting in places other than their litter tray.

Here are a few reasons why they do this:

- To help them feel safe in their environment
- Claim a familiar object or person
- Communicate with other animals, making them aware of their presence.

### Common cat scent-marking behaviours

Your cat may rub against furniture and walls, or even headbutt you! This is their way of transferring their scent (natural pheromones) using scent glands in their face and head.

Cats will rub against things when happy, but also if they're feeling a little unsure of their environment. You'll see them displaying this rubbing behaviour in their core living area. It's a way for them to feel relaxed and content. You might hear them purring away too.

You might also see a greasy brown mark where your cat has rubbed up against something. It's best to avoid cleaning this off because it helps them feel safe in a familiar environment.

### What cat scratching post should you buy?

Commercially available cat scratching posts range from a basic single post to floor-to-ceiling activity centres or cat trees. Cat trees provide your cat with opportunities for play, exercise and rest,

as well as hiding places and a variety of surfaces to scratch. Invest in a sturdy one – cats will seldom use something too flimsy.

Avoid buying a scratching post specifically designed for kittens. These posts don't stay tall or sturdy enough for very long as your kitten grows.

In households of two or more cats, you'll need at least one scratching post per cat plus an additional one – all positioned in different locations.

Scratching posts are best positioned by doors where a cat may walk in and out. These areas pose a potential threat for cats, so they are more likely to leave their scent here to protect themselves and their territory.

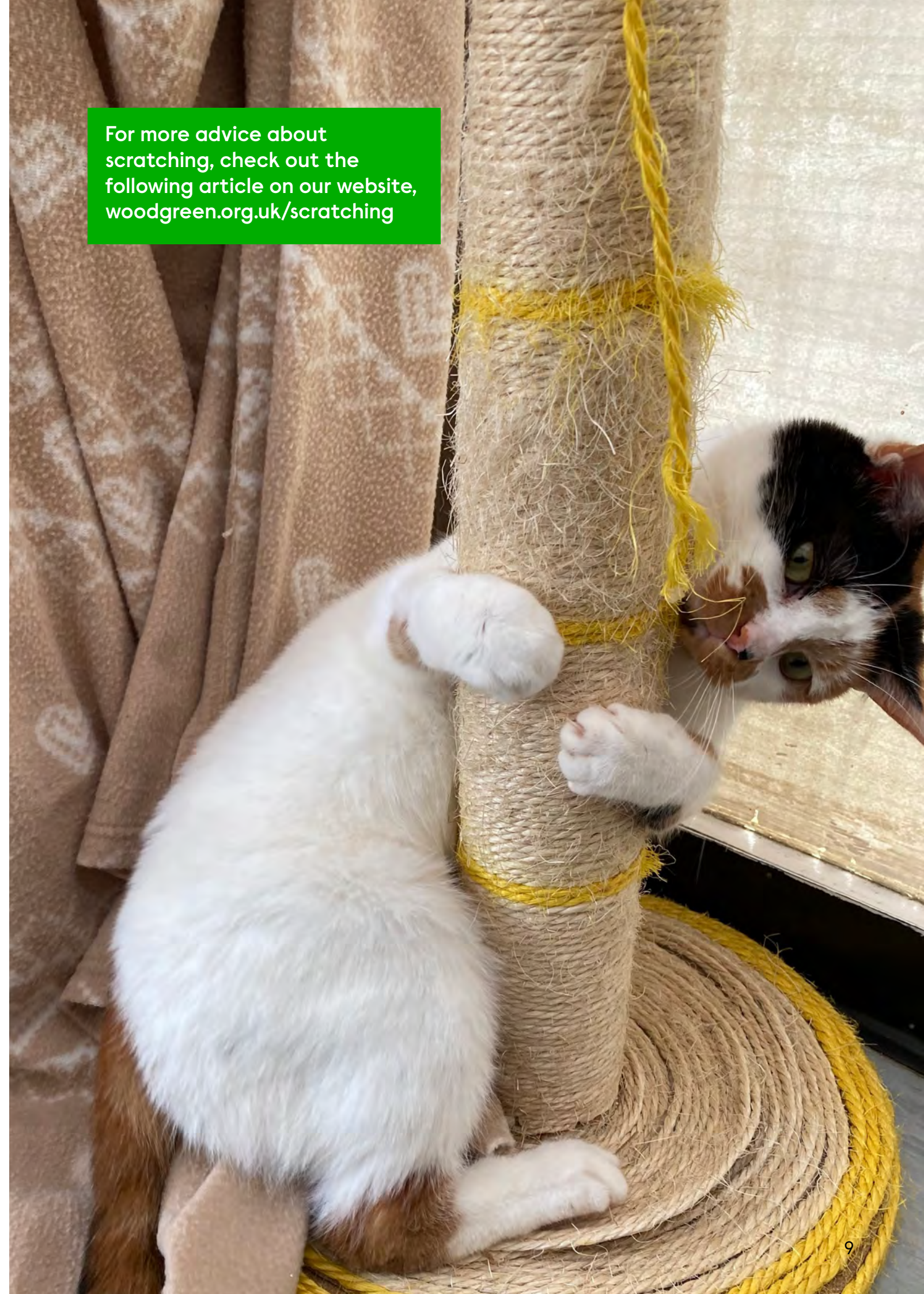
### How to encourage your cat to use a scratching post

Some posts are already laced with catnip, designed to encourage your cat to use them. You can also offer predatory toys like a wand toy or feather for your cat to chase around the base. This will encourage your cat's claws to make contact with the surface and continue to use the post.

Sprinkling some tasty dry food on the post is also a great incentive. There are also synthetic pheromone products designed to attract your cat to use the scratching post.

If space is an issue, you can attach scratching panels to the walls – these can be commercial or home-made from sisal, bark or corrugated cardboard. Position them to allow your cat to scratch at full stretch.

For more advice about scratching, check out the following article on our website, [woodgreen.org.uk/scratching](http://woodgreen.org.uk/scratching)





## Litter trays

Every cat should have access to a litter tray, even if they toilet outside. If you're rehoming more than one cat, we suggest a litter tray each, plus one extra.

Litter trays should be placed in quiet areas of the home. They should be easily accessible for cats to get to without having to cross busy, noisy rooms.

It's a good idea to spread out your cat's litter trays around the home or room they're settling into. This will give them lots of options if they don't feel they can use a certain tray for any reason.

Our team will let you know what kind of litter tray and litter your new cat has been using at Woodgreen. This will help their move from our centre to your home.

Remember that litter trays should have enough room for your cat to stand up,

squat and turn around in. We suggest filling each tray with 3cm depth worth of litter.

It's worth bearing in mind as our feline friends get older, they may find it more difficult to climb in and out of the litter tray. They may also find it uncomfortable to squat down. For older cats, we recommend a tray with a low entry point for easy access and raised sides to help prevent litter spilling out.

### Outdoor toileting

As well as providing litter trays around your home for your cat to finish their business, you may like to have a designated area outside for them too. All you need to do is spread some loose non-toxic sand or soil in a private area of your garden.

Ideally, make sure this area is covered enough to protect from sun, wind and rain, to make it appealing for your cat to use in all weathers. You should also clean out this area every day for your cat to return to.



## Time to bring home your cat companion!

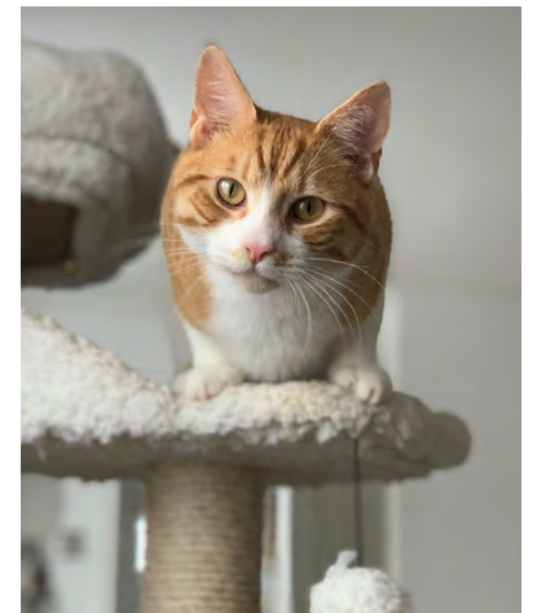
So, the day you've been preparing for is finally here! It's time to bring home your new cat. Our team will give you a piece of the cat's bedding or their favourite toy, something with a familiar scent on it. This will give them some comfort as they settle into family life.

When you arrive home, take the carrier straight to the room you prepared and close the door behind you. This is an important first step, especially if you have other pets in the home. Letting them see or sniff the carrier whilst the cat is in there can have a negative effect on introductions later on. Place the carrier down in the room and remove the door for your cat to come out in their own time.

Some cats may need to be left alone for a couple of hours to get used to their new surroundings, nervous cats may want to stay in their carrier until nightfall and others might not eat or use their litter trays for the first 24 hours.

Once your cat is confident around you and comfortable in their room, you can slowly introduce them to the rest of the house. It's worth bearing in mind that some cats may find a hiding place, so be sure to check behind appliances, furniture and any other nooks and crannies they could squeeze behind or climb on top of.

**Even with confident cats, it's still best to take things slowly when it comes to opening them up to the rest of your home.**



### You'll know they're happy if:

- They come over to greet you when you go into the room
- You notice them using all the space in the room
- They're eating well
- Toys are being played with





## Nervous cats

Some cats are more nervous than others and may take several weeks or months for them to adjust to their new surroundings.

Our cats arrive at Woodgreen from different backgrounds and they all have their own story. Some may have experienced stressful situations causing them to become anxious, triggering some tricky behaviours. Our Cat Care team work closely with these cats, placing them in a home with a fosterer. Some cats may remain fearful until they are fully settled into a new home.

## Did you know, cats communicate with us via their body language?

If you notice your new cat blinking slowly, it's their way of telling you they're not a threat, and content in your presence. You can respond by slowly blinking back to give your feline friend some much-needed reassurance. It takes time and patience when it comes to settling your new cat, but once they come around, it's incredibly rewarding.

## Here are some of our top tips:

- Create a few hiding places for your cat – cardboard boxes are excellent for this!
- Talk in a soft voice.
- Avoid making sudden movements in the same room as your cat – let them come to you.
- Leave treats or tasty food behind when you have been in their room.
- Sit in the room with them and read out loud to the cat so they get used to your voice.
- Place their food and water bowls near their hiding spots.
- Try not to stare directly at them, instead use the slow blinking technique.

Cats are a solitary species and instinctually will flee if threatened. Providing multiple safe places for your cat to hide will really benefit a nervous cat, helping them feel safe and secure.





## Stopping escapees!



The last thing you want is your new feline friend escaping when you bring them home, so for the next two to three weeks make sure you keep all doors and windows closed in rooms your cat has access to. If you do have to open a window, check your cat isn't in the room.

If you have a cat flap, the best way to stop your cat from escaping through it is to deny them access to the room where the cat flap is. Alternatively, you could block the cat flap off with cardboard or wood, providing no other cats in your house need to access it.



### Cat flaps

Not all cats will need to use a cat flap in the home, as long as they can gain access outside via a door or window.

If you are unable to have a cat flap fitted in your house and you have a garage or shed, it's a good idea to get one installed here. This way, you can provide your cat with a place for them to seek shelter if you're not home and they still want to be outside.

If you're looking to install or upgrade your current cat flap, we would recommend a microchip recognition one. Once your cat's microchip is registered, the flap will open for them but remain locked for any cat whose chip is not registered, preventing unwanted visitors.



## Cats and Children

Whether you have a baby or a house full of children already, if you're getting a new cat, here are some tips on keeping everyone safe and happy.

- Create a safe space for your furry new arrival with all their belongings inside.
- Create hiding places for your cat to retreat to where children aren't allowed. For example, a cardboard box. If the cat is inside the box, then the children can't touch.
- Provide high up spaces where your cat can observe their surroundings out of reach of children.
- Sit in the same room as your cat and talk to them from a distance. This will help to build their confidence.
- Encourage safe play from a distance with feather wand toys. This will prevent accidental scratches.

Encouraging positive interactions between your cat and the children will help to build a strong bond between them for a happy future. It's important your children know to respect your cat's boundaries. Allow the kids to sit down calmly and wait for the cat to come over for gentle fuss and attention. Get your children to hold a hand out for the cat to sniff but not touching them yet. It's always best to allow the cat to instigate any attention rather than have children approaching them. This can cause your cat to feel worried and threatened, even if your child hasn't meant to do this.

Get your child involved with your cat's feeding routine. Allow them to place the food down for the cat and leave them to come and eat. This will help your new cat acknowledge your children are providing something positive and tasty!

Head over to our website and check out our article about cats and babies: [woodgreen.org.uk/cats-and-babies](http://woodgreen.org.uk/cats-and-babies) or watch this video:

<https://youtu.be/fRyVt5ZSaik>



## Cat encounters

**Bringing a new cat home is very exciting for you, but what about for any existing cats you have? Here's a little guide to help everyone adjust to this change.**



### Starting introductions

By now, you will have a dedicated room set up for your new cat with everything they need to settle. Leave them to explore their new environment and become familiar with their surroundings. Your cats will already be aware of each other's presence through scent so continue to spend time with them both separately until they're content.

### Swapping scents

Once both cats are settled, it's time to swap scents. This is an important part of any cat introduction because they rely on scent to absorb information.

Swapping items of bedding and toys is a good way of getting your cats used to one another's scent. Place these items in the other cat's space for them to sniff and rub their face against. Always let your cat approach the item with the other cat's scent on. Rubbing a blanket over one cat then directly on the other may overwhelm them.

When your cats are relaxed with the others scent, you can start giving them

tasty treats and leave toys either side of the door for them to play with. This will help them build positive associations with what lies on the other side of the door!

### Preparing to meet

Before your feline friends meet face-to-face, make sure each cat has access to their own resources in separate parts of the house. This includes their food, bed, water bowl and litter tray.

Provide areas around the home where your cats can hide and rest. This will give them the choice to be in each other's company without having direct contact. It's a good idea to keep the spare room as your new cat's base for a while, so they always have a familiar place to come back to.

If possible, allow your new cat to explore the house while the others are out. This will give them a chance to get used to the whole house first before any hairy encounters.

### The first meeting

Open the door that separates them slowly and allow your cats to enter in their own time. Once they're in the same room, try to distract each of them with toys and food from opposite ends. Your cats will judge each other through scent, body language, posture and sound. At this stage, you should expect some hissing and growling. This is normal behaviour, but if the introduction results in fighting, place a pillow or sheet

between the two cats and put your new cat back in their room.

It's not a good idea to break up a fight by picking one cat up, as you're likely to get hurt.

It may take a while for both cats to get used to each other, but they will settle if they have plenty of space and enough resources. If they seem to be getting along, you can let them both have free access to the house.







## Introducing your new cat to your existing pets

Cats and dogs can live quite happily together, but you will need to take steps to give your pets the space they need to adjust to each other. Introductions must be done slowly, and with great care.

Follow the first three steps the same as if you were introducing two cats together, then once your dog and cat are settled, they can meet.

It's a good idea for your dog to be calm and relaxed beforehand, so taking them for a brisk stroll will help burn off any energy. Once you return home, keep your dog on the lead as your cat enters the room. Let them approach each other for a sniff and then call them away. Give your dog a tasty treat every time he looks away from your cat and towards you and reward your cat in the same way when they are around the dog.

Remember, your new cat is getting used to strange smells, sights and sounds, so make sure all introductions are slow and careful. Let your pets investigate each other at their own pace. This will help to establish a long-lasting relationship.

Woodgreen would not recommend the use of a cage or crate when introducing your new cat to other pets in the home. This could cause your cat to become stressed because they don't have the choice to flee from a potential threat or scary situation.

If you need any more advice about how to prepare your home for a new and existing pet, we are more than happy to help, so feel free to contact us.

## Keeping your cat entertained

### Hiding and perching

It's important to provide plenty of places throughout the home for your cat to retreat to when they want to relax or watch what's going on without being seen. This could be as simple as an upturned sturdy cardboard box (big enough for your cat to lie in, turn around and sit on top of), or a chair with a large towel draped over it.

### Jumping and climbing

All cats should have the opportunity to climb and jump up high. You could use tree branches for ramps, provide platforms and sturdy cardboard boxes, tall scratching posts and even let them explore shelving – minus the ornaments, of course.

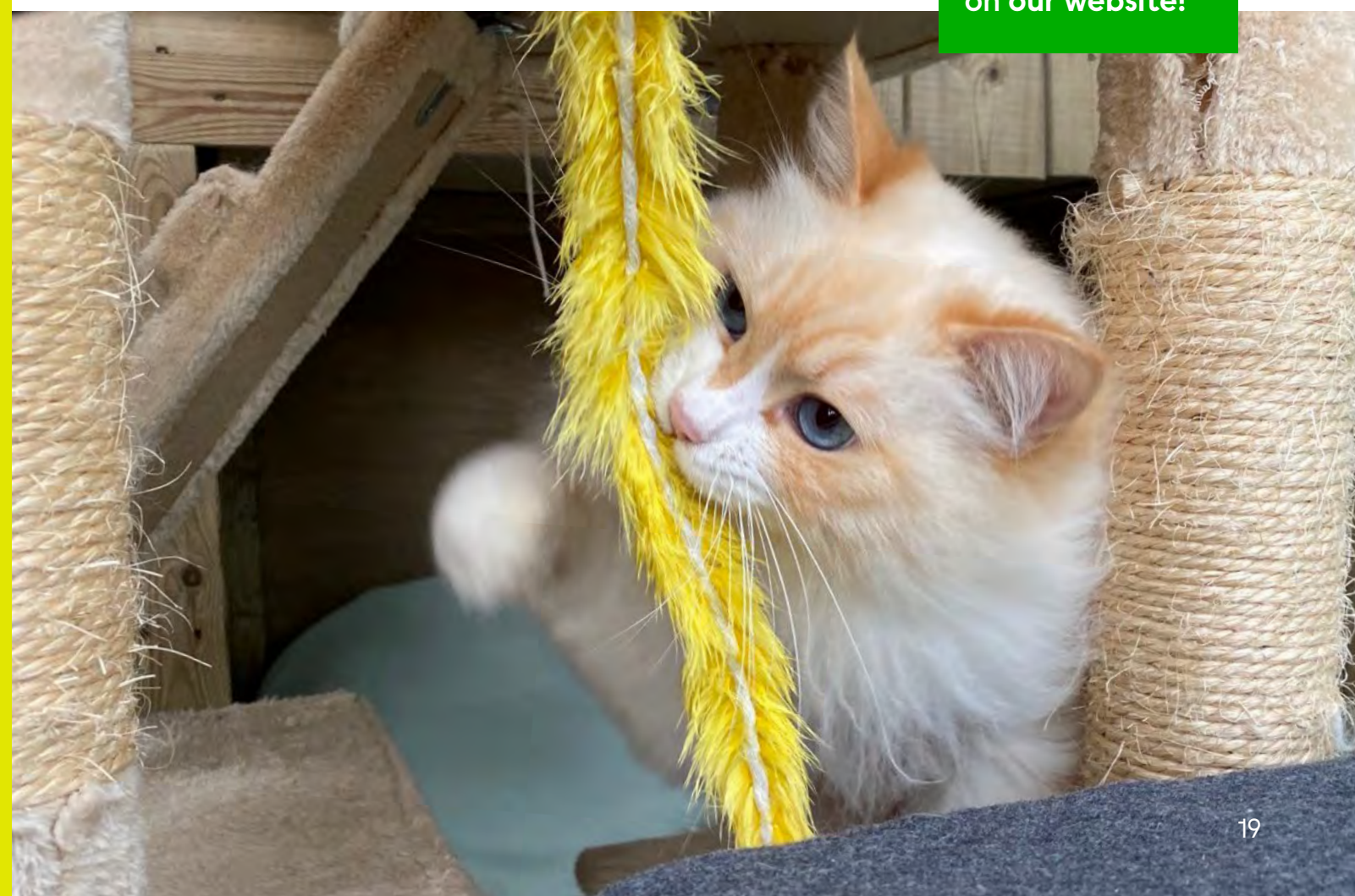
### Playing, hunting and mental stimulation

Providing lots of toys for your cat to play with will help them feel satisfied and calm. Every cat has a desire to hunt, it's one of their natural instincts and some will be more keen than others. When a cat plays, they mimic the hunting sequence – eye, stalk, chase, catch and kill – this helps to satisfy their primal urges.

**We recommend the following toys:**

- String toys
- Feather toys
- Ping pong balls
- Cat nip toys
- Stalking toys

**If you're looking for advice on keeping cats entertained we have plenty to inspire you on our website!**





# Letting your cat out for the first time

**Allowing your cat the freedom to come and go as they please means they can express their natural behaviours. Exposing them to an ever-changing environment outside the home will help to keep them happy and healthy!**

Cats tend to bond to their environment first before people, so it's important they're settled in the home before you let them outside.

## For kittens

It's best to keep tiny kittens safe inside until they are neutered, fully vaccinated and have reached four months old.

## What about for adult cats?

Adult cats should be kept indoors for the first two to three weeks while they settle into their new home. All cats are different, though. Some may be ready to explore the great outdoors earlier than two weeks.

## What steps should you take?

- In the first few weeks of bringing your new cat home, be on your guard when opening doors and windows. If you have an escape artist, there's a chance your cat may not return.
- Try to feed your cat around the same time each day so they expect to come to you for food at those times.
- While you're preparing their dinner, make a sound for them to associate



with food. For example, you can call out 'dinner', whistle, or rattle a tin with some dry food in it.

- Check the weather forecast and let your cat out on a calm day.
- Plan ahead for a quiet day when there aren't many comings and goings. Your cat won't be keen on going out in a garden full of people.
- For particularly nervous cats, why not keep them company in the garden? You can also leave the back door open for them so they know they can retreat inside if things get too much for them.
- Every cat from Woodgreen is microchipped and their details will be transferred when they're rehomed. New owners are then responsible for updating their details if they move house or change phone numbers.
- It's worth attaching an identification tag to your cat's collar so people know they're microchipped.

# Make your garden appealing

By making a few simple changes to your garden, you can create a wonderful environment for your cat to enjoy when things get a bit too much in the house. Below are some ideas on how to enrich your outdoor space:

## Hiding places

Plant pots and small shrubs provide great hiding spots for your cat while protecting them from the rain or mid-day sun. Shelter can be in the form of large shrubs, trees, garden furniture and sun parasols.

Cats feel safe when they can watch from above, so provide your cat with logs, posts and platforms for them to climb.

Shed roofs are usually a very popular space for cats to keep a look out. Try to work out a safe way up and down from here, as your cat will enjoy this spot.



## Water features

Many cats prefer to drink outside from large water containers. Providing safe water features, fountains or rain collection dishes will give your cat a variety of options. Some cats even enjoy playing in water!

## Cat-friendly plants

Natural grasses and cat grass helps aid in your cat's digestion and makes the environment feel more natural, as will non-toxic, cat friendly plants and herbs, such as bamboo, catnip, lavender and valerian.

You can see a full list of poisonous food and plants to avoid on our website: [woodgreen.org.uk/pet-advice/cat/poisonous-foods-for-cats/](https://woodgreen.org.uk/pet-advice/cat/poisonous-foods-for-cats/)

## Toys

Scattering plenty of toys outside will provide lots of entertainment for your cat, helping them to feel happy, reduce feelings of frustration and avoid unwanted behaviours.

## Scratching facilities

Fences and trees make great scratching places for cats. Not only will they leave their scent and mark their territory on these areas, they also use them to sharpen their claws and condition their bodies. Providing extra logs or outdoor climbing facilities will add more adventure and opportunities for your cat.



# Cat harnesses and leads

## Could my cat wear a harness?

Some cats may tolerate wearing a harness or lead, others won't. Generally, you might find your cat reluctant to wear one. There are certain risks that suggest it may not be safe to train your cat to wear a harness, no matter how tolerant they are.

## How might a harness or lead affect a cat's natural instincts?

Considering your cat's natural instincts and responses, using a harness or lead could potentially be very scary and stressful for them.



## Fight or flight

Cats are naturally a flight animal. They have a built-in response to run away from danger and to hide in a safe place, usually up a tree, or back into the home where they feel safe. Use of a harness would take this natural reaction away from them, causing them to become stressed and unhappy.

## Hunting

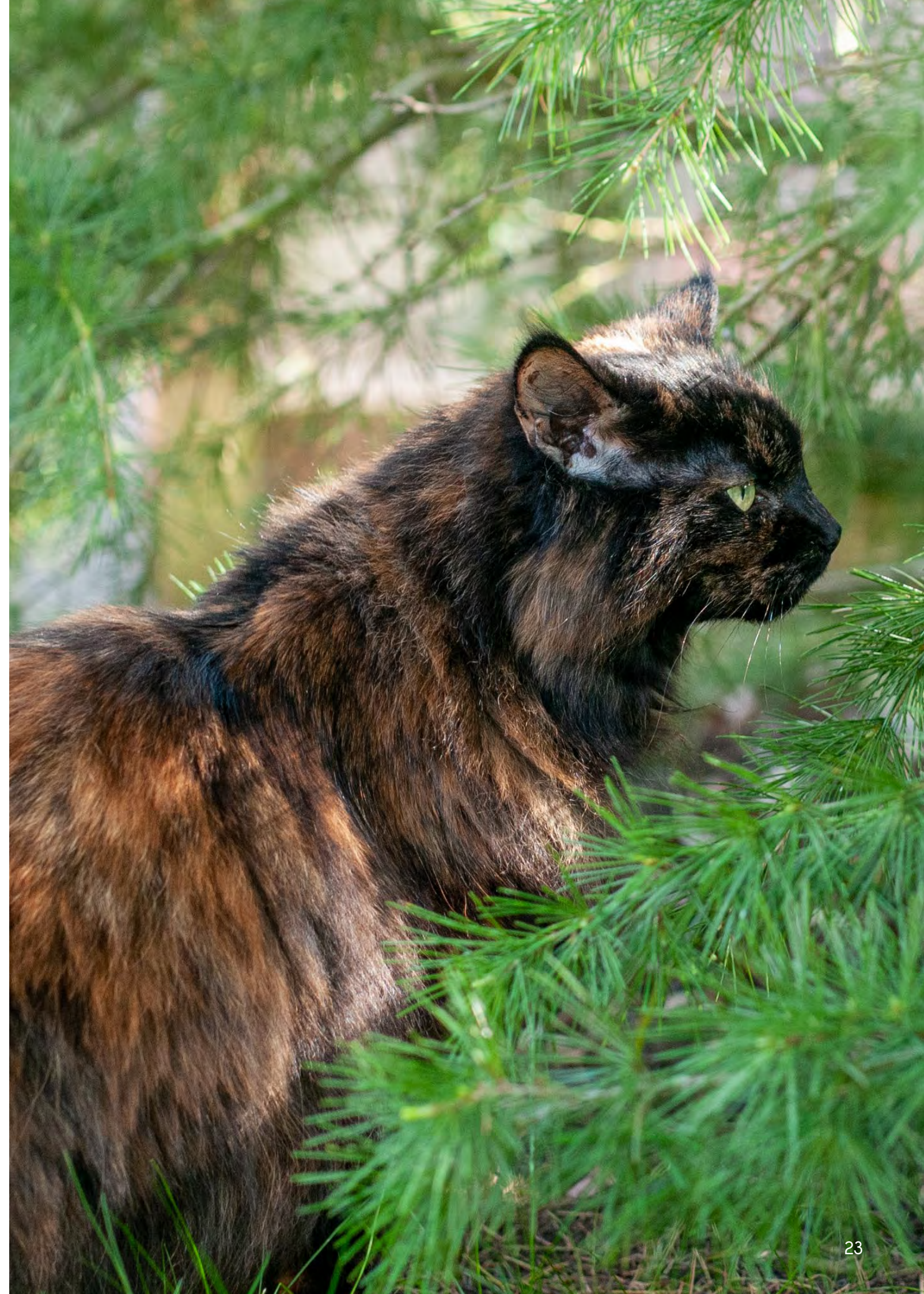
Another natural instinct of your cat is to hunt. Some cat owners may try to prevent hunting by introducing a harness or lead. This can be very frustrating for a cat and even cause behavioural issues similar to indoor cats. They may show aggressive behaviours towards you or others in the home, including pets.

## Risks of using a cat harness or lead

It's easier than you think to lose your grip when using a harness or lead, especially if your cat tries to escape. The harness could get caught on something and given a cat's natural ability to climb, this could be a very dangerous.

Even if your cat appears willing to wear a harness or lead, it doesn't necessarily mean they're happy about it, especially when all they want is to play and hunt outside.

Taking your cat or kitten outside wearing a harness will allow them to experience a few sights and sounds while keeping them close to you. But they won't be able to enjoy the experience of roaming freely while hunting and playing as they wish.







## How to groom your cat

### What type of grooming does your cat need?

Short-haired cats will generally find it easy to keep their coat clean. They require light grooming on a regular basis using a bristle brush or a short-toothed comb.

Semi-haired cats require grooming a few times a week to prevent knots and matts. Use a metal comb that has alternate long and short teeth – the long teeth reach down to the base of

the coat and the short teeth will pick up any excess hair on the surface. For added shine, use a soft brush.

Long-haired cats require daily grooming all over to keep their coat in top condition. The best comb for the job is a metal one with alternate long and short teeth. Pay close attention to the fur around the bottom, legs and stomach.

### The importance of grooming

- Grooming will help prevent hairballs, formed when your cat swallows dead hair during self-grooming.
- Brush strokes help stimulate the circulation and enhance their muscle tone.
- Spreads natural oils which the cat produces to waterproof the coat.
- Reduces the likelihood of having matts removed under anaesthetic.
- It's a chance to spend some quality time with your cat companion and build a strong bond.
- You can take the opportunity to check for any lumps on your cat's body.
- Keeps your cat cool in the summer months.

### The grooming process

- Make sure your cat is on a stable surface, such as the sofa or the floor. Spend a little time comforting your cat by stroking them or entice them with treats. Take a few calm breaths before you start – your cat will react if they sense you're nervous.
- Show your cat a soft bristled brush and allow them to smell it or rub their face against it if they want to. Start at their head and brush in the direction of the cat's fur, avoiding the whiskers. If your cat enjoys this then move down to their shoulders.
- Use a quiet and gentle voice to reassure them throughout grooming.
- Initially, you should only groom them for a few minutes. Gradually increase this over time but never for longer than 15 minutes.
- Keep the treats coming! Reward your cat throughout so they associate grooming with something nice.



- Take extra care around sensitive areas like their hind and bottom. Read their body language and stop at any point if your cat appears unhappy.
- Once your cat is used to a soft brush, you can introduce a metal one.
- If you find a small area of fur that is already knotted, try teasing the knot with your fingers or cut it away. It can be very unpleasant for your cat to have these groomed out.

Generally, starting your cat's grooming routine on a positive note will make for a pleasant experience in the long run. If your cat is already severely matted, it's worth contacting your local vet about getting your cat de-matted, that way you can start afresh.

### On-going grooming care

It's really important that once you start grooming your cat and getting them used to this experience, you keep it up. Make time to fit grooming into your daily routine. This could be when the family sit down to watch television in the evenings. That way you can look forward to quality time with the whole family, including your furry friend.



# Support for you and your pet

## Veterinary care for cats

You should take your cat for regular checks at your local vet– they will be able to monitor your cat’s physical health. Yearly vaccinations and regular flea and worm treatments will help to keep your cat in tip top condition.

If something isn’t right, speak to a vet. If your pet’s behaving differently, or they’re not eating or drinking as normal, there’s a cause.

Visiting the vet when you first notice a change is key. Problems that get left can get worse very quickly, making them much more difficult and possibly more expensive to treat.

We recommend routine blood tests for cats over the age of ten as well as regular blood pressure checks. This can help pick up early signs of any illness.

## Dental care

Older cats are prone to dental problems and need their teeth checked regularly. Your vet can advise you about dental care on a regular basis to help protect your cat’s teeth in the future.

Allowing your cat to eat kibble or something that rubs against their teeth can be an effective way of preventing a build-up of tartar and plaque. If you’re worried about your cat and their dental health, we would advise speaking to your vet who will be able to help.

If you keep your cat’s teeth in good condition then you can avoid the need for regular dental treatment under anaesthetic, where the vet will clean and possibly remove teeth.

## Pet Insurance

Pet insurance can give you peace of mind, knowing if your feline friend needs urgent veterinary care, you’re covered!

All pets rehomed from Woodgreen come with four weeks of free pet insurance.

We recommend that you continue with a pet insurance policy as you never know what can happen and it’s best to be prepared in case of an emergency. This is especially important if you rehome a senior cat from us.

### Here are a few points to consider...

- People are more likely to claim on their pet insurance policy than their car or household policies.
- Advances in veterinary medicine means that vets can do more for pets, but some treatments can be expensive.
- Pet insurance allows you to budget monthly rather than face unexpected bills that you might not be able to afford.
- Having pet insurance allows you to concentrate on what’s best for your cat rather than worrying about whether you can afford the cost of treatment.
- When looking at different pet insurance, take into consideration the length of cover. We would suggest looking for policies that promise a lifetime cover.

## Thank you for choosing Woodgreen!

Thank you for choosing to rehome your new feline friend from Woodgreen! Don’t forget we have a specialist team of behaviourists dedicated to supporting new and existing animals, and we offer free advice and support with any worries or concerns you may have, for as long as you have your pet.



## Support our work

### Volunteer with us

Volunteering can be really rewarding, and there are many ways you can help us. Fostering pets is also a valuable way to help the animals in our care whilst they wait for their loving forever homes.

### Turn your passion for pets into pounds

From bake sales and sponsored sleepovers to taking part in an event, there are lots of ways to get involved.

### Sponsorship

Did you also know you can sponsor a dog, cat, or small pet from as little 21p a day?

For more information visit [woodgreen.org.uk/how-to-help](http://woodgreen.org.uk/how-to-help)



# Got any questions? We're all ears! Get in touch today.

**Visit:** [woodgreen.org.uk](https://www.woodgreen.org.uk)

**Call:** 0300 303 9333

**Email:** [info@woodgreen.org.uk](mailto:info@woodgreen.org.uk)

## **Godmanchester Centre**

King's Bush Farm, London Road,  
Godmanchester, Huntingdon  
PE29 2NH

Keep up to date with what's happening at Woodgreen, including events, latest workshops and how you're helping pets by following us on **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn**.  
Simply search **@woodgreenpetscharity** (X/Twitter - **@woodgreenpets**).



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Helping pets and their people