

Lampasas Animal Shelter
301 College St
Lampasas, TX 76550
(512) 556-8586
lampasasanimalshelter@cityoflampasas.com

How to care for a kitten

Keep them fed, keep them warm, keep them clean.

Milestones for Underage Pets

1-2 weeks old

- Bottle feeding & stimulation every 2-3 hours

2-3 weeks old

- Schedule deworm and re-weigh if not dewormed at LAS previously
- Bottle feeding and stimulation every 3-4 hours
- transitioning to wet food & litterbox (**non-clumping litter)

4-5 weeks old

- Watered down wet kitten food (or mixed with kitten milk) offered in bowl (or on finger to start if stubborn!) every 4-5 hours; ok overnight for 7 hours depending on health
- ALWAYS have wet kitten food available & litterbox (**non-clumping litter)

6 weeks old

- Schedule 1st booster with the foster coordinator either by calling the shelter at 512-556-8586 or by emailing FOSTER@CITYOFLAMPASAS.COM
- Wet kitten food offered every 6-7 hours, OK overnight (ALWAYS have dry and wet food available)

9 weeks old

- Email FOSTER@CITYOFLAMPASAS.COM with a new photo and short bio for each pet. This helps us for when we place the pet up for adoption.
- Wet food offered every 7-9 hours; always have dry food available

12 weeks old:

- If your kitten is shy or slow growing, you may have it a little longer. That's ok! Just keep sending us new photos and videos and keep loving your pet! We'll help!

Please remember, kittens are VERY vulnerable. Anything out of the ordinary for longer than 12 hours is an emergency. Please call us at 512-556-8586 with any issues and we will get an appointment scheduled with our vet.

In most cases, kittens in extreme distress will not benefit from an emergency vet visit.

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Bottle Feeding

Please be aware that overfeeding kittens can be as dangerous as underfeeding! Keep an eye on the kittens at feeding time and monitor how much each one is eating visually and by weighing each kitten at the same time each day.

NEVER give a kitten cow's milk.

Bottle babies should be fed kitten milk replacement formula. LAS will provide milk replacement formula and a bottle if available when you pick up your bottle babies. Please contact the foster coordinator if you require more.

Feed the appropriate amount of food per day for the size of kitten. Read the package information on the formula you are using to determine the correct amount of formula per day. Below is the chart for recommended feeding amounts of KMR:

Kittens that are 1 week old should weigh around 4 ounces and eat around 32 ml a day split between 6 feeding times.
Kittens that are 2 weeks old should weigh around 7 ounces and eat around 56 ml a day split between 4 feeding times.
Kittens that are 3 weeks old should weigh around 10 ounces and eat around 80 ml a day split between 3 feeding times.
Kittens that are 4 weeks old should weigh around 13 ounces and eat around 104 ml a day split between 3 feeding times.
Kittens that are 5 weeks old should weigh around 1 pound and eat around 128 ml a day split between 3 feeding times.
Please make sure to refrigerate any kitten milk upon receiving it!

How to Bottle Feed:

- Make a hole in the nipple. This hole should be large enough to allow the milk to drop slowly from the nipple when it is inverted.
 - Make the formula based on the instructions on the container and make sure the formula is well mixed.
 - Warm the formula to approximately 100 degrees F. The formula should feel warm on your wrist at this temperature.
 - Never squeeze the bottle to force the formula out. This can cause the kitten to inhale the formula into his lungs.
- Always stimulate the kitten to urinate/defecate before and after each feeding (until 3-4 weeks of age). To stimulate the kitten, take a warm damp cloth and gently rub the anus/genital area. This action simulates how the mother cat would lick her babies. Your kitten(s) will probably not have a bowel movement every feeding and may sometimes even skip a day. This should be fine as long as the kitten is growing, eating, not showing any signs of distress, and continues to urinate.

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How to Wean

Generally, it is best to start weaning kittens at 3 to 5 weeks of age. Weaning should be a gradual process. If you are lucky enough to have the mother cat with her kittens, she will take care of the weaning process herself. You will want to be sure you are supplying enough food for the nursing mother cat as well as the weaning kittens. Begin introducing 3 to 5 week old kittens to semi-solid gruel, made from 1-part canned food to 3 parts hot water or kitten milk replacement formula. Be sure to serve the food at **body temperature, (98°F to 100°F)**. Offer this mixture **3 to 4 times daily**. Remove the gruel after about 30 minutes and discard (it can grow bacteria quite quickly if left out).

Introducing Food

Dip your finger into the gruel and let the kitten lick at it or smear a small amount on the kitten's lips. Be careful not to get any of the gruel in the kitten's nose. You may also touch a finger into the gruel and then place the finger into the kitten's mouth. At around 5 weeks of age, the kittens should be reducing their intake of mother's milk. Once they are consistently eating the gruel, gradually decrease the amount of water used. Always provide plenty of fresh water in clean bowls. All changes in amounts and consistency of food should be made gradually to promote good digestion. Some kittens take longer to wean than others. It is important to always watch the litter to ensure that everyone is eating healthy amounts of food. Check tummies for fullness after each meal.

Fostering Under-Socialized Kittens

Under-socialized, neglected, and frightened kittens may be the most challenging to foster. They require specialized care to qualify for our adoption program. Many arrive never having lived indoors among people, with minimal human contact during their critical imprinting stage. These kittens may have never been inside a house, may not be litter trained, and may have never experienced kindness from a human. They will require a great deal of attention, patience, and time from their foster family. Under-socialized kittens must be closely monitored to reduce the chance of escape or destructive behavior. They frequently require fostering for at least a month while they acquire the social skills that will make them treasured lifelong companions for a lucky family. Under-socialized kittens are considered "high risk" fosters. Some will never respond to human attention enough to become adoption candidates. If this occurs, outcomes beyond regular adoptions into a home are discussed with the LAS team. Under-socialized kittens are housed best in smaller rooms with just a few hiding places (bathrooms and crates are ideal). The kitten can be found more easily this way. Canned food can be used as a treat or for enticement and should be given when you are able to spend time with the kitten, if possible. Do not withhold food, but make it enticing enough for the kitten to come out of hiding when a person is in the room.

Daily Duties

Handle the kitten: talking, stroking, brushing, lifting paws, check ears, mouth, and eyes. Reading aloud in the room where the kitten is staying can also be helpful. During this time, you may have treats, or an enticing toy to lure the kitten out of hiding. While you read, act like you are not aware the kitten is there, even when it comes out to see you. Introduce the cat to a litter box. Socialize the kitten, when ready, to other people.