



# New Kitten Survival Guide

WELCOMING YOUR NEW KITTEN INTO YOUR HOME

BY DR BELINDA PARSONS BVSC

**Rouse Hill**  
Family Vets



# New Kitten Survival Guide

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NEW ADDITION!



## Our Top Tips for Welcoming Your New Kitten into Your Home

*BY DR BELINDA PARSONS BVSC*

Congratulations on the arrival of your gorgeous little bundle of fur that is full of energy, sharp teeth and an endless supply of urine.

It may take a day or two for them to come out of their shell but in no time at all they rule the house and have you all bowing to their every want and need.

As time goes on you have more and more questions about them. What if they don't sleep through the night? What if they bring fleas into the home? What if they don't grow and put on weight like you would expect? What if they have diarrhoea? Will the litter training ever end? Where do you get the right information from?

Our experienced veterinarians and veterinary nurses are asked these questions everyday and over the years we have found the tried and true ways to not only survive the first week with your new kitten but thrive with them as they grow.

Getting your kitten off to the best start is our passion and so we have created the our New Kitten Survival Guide which walks you through:

- Kitten Proofing the Environment
- Bedding
- Finding your Veterinary Team
- Microchipping
- Kitten Appropriate Diets
- Kitten Toys
- Litter Training
- Kitten socialisation plan
- Pheromones - Feliway
- Pet Insurance
- Stress Free Car Trips

We look forward to meeting your little bundle of joy and answering any other questions you have about new family member.

**Rouse Hill**  
Family Vets





# Kitten Proofing the Environment

To help your kitten feel safe and confident in their new environment, start by limiting their access to just one or two rooms. Giving them too much space too soon can be overwhelming, confusing, and even dangerous.

Choose a calm, secure area of the home as their base and take a moment to kitten-proof the space:

- Hide cords and cables – Kittens love to chew, and exposed wires are a hazard. Use cable covers or tuck them away out of reach.
- Secure chemicals and medications – Anything that could be toxic should be stored well out of reach or behind closed doors.
- Remove small objects – If it fits in their mouth, it's fair game. Pick up anything that could be swallowed or cause a choking hazard.
- Keep string, yarn, and hair ties out of reach – These common playthings can be very dangerous if ingested and may require surgery to remove.

In their room, provide the essentials:

- A cosy bed
- A variety of safe toys
- A clean litter tray placed away from their food and bedding

Restricting their space not only keeps your kitten safe, but it also helps with litter training. If they can easily find their tray, they're more likely to use it consistently.



## Bedding

Kittens also benefit from having a cosy, secure space they can call their own. While kittens don't typically use crates the same way puppies do, a quiet, enclosed bed or soft hideaway can help them feel safe, sleep better, and adjust more easily to their new home.

Some tips for setting up the perfect kitten sleeping spot:

- Choose a quiet, low-traffic area away from noise and activity
- Use a soft bed or lined cat cave—something they can curl up in and feel secure
- Avoid placing the bed too close to the litter tray
- Let your kitten explore the space on their own terms—never force them in or out

This space should always feel like a safe haven. Encourage your kitten to use it by placing a favourite toy, blanket, or a piece of clothing with your scent nearby. Over time, it will become a comforting retreat where they can rest and reset.

**Bonus tip:** If you've adopted two kittens, provide at least one bed per kitten, even if they love to snuggle together.

## Microchipping

By law in NSW your kitten should be microchipped before they join your family. The breeder is responsible for changing the microchip into your name.

Ensure that you have claimed your pet's microchip through the [NSW Pet Registry](https://www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au/).



# Finding your Veterinary Team

To ensure your kitten is protected against deadly diseases and parasites it is vital that you have a veterinary team that is looking out for your new puppy's wellbeing.

We recommend an initial health check within 72 hours of your new kitten joining your family. This will allow your kitten to have a full health check, discuss how your kitten is settling into your home and for your veterinary team to check that your kitten is receiving the right preventative care.

A thorough preventative care plan includes vaccinations, worming, flea and heartworm prevention dates. By the time you pick up your kitten they should have been wormed regularly and received at least one vaccination.

Kittens require a total of three vaccinations with their final kitten vaccination being at 16 weeks of age or older.

It is important that your kitten and your family are protected against heartworm, fleas, paralysis ticks and intestinal worms. Some intestinal worms have zoonotic potential (this means they can be passed onto us) and so preventative care for your puppy helps to keep your whole family safe.



## Kitten Appropriate Diet

Growing kittens need a nutritionally balanced diet to support healthy development of their muscles, bones, immune system, and brain. Homemade diets are difficult to get right and can lead to serious deficiencies if not carefully balanced—if you're considering this route, consult a veterinary nutritionist first.

For most kittens, we recommend feeding a high-quality kitten-specific kibble (or wet food) tailored to their age and lifestyle. These diets are formulated to provide everything your kitten needs to grow into a happy, healthy cat.

### Foods to Avoid for Kittens

- ❌ Raw meat or bones – Kittens have immature immune systems and are more susceptible to harmful bacteria like salmonella or campylobacter
- ❌ Milk or dairy products – Most kittens become lactose intolerant after weaning, which can cause diarrhoea
- ❌ Chicken necks or wings – Small bones can splinter or become choking hazards
- ❌ Chocolate, onions, garlic, grapes, sultanas, macadamia nuts – All are toxic to cats and must be avoided
- ❌ Dog food – It doesn't meet the specific nutritional needs of kittens

### Kitten-Safe Treats (in moderation!)

- ✅ Cooked boiled chicken, cut into tiny pieces
- ✅ Commercial kitten treats (check for "complete and balanced" or vet-recommended options)
- ✅ Churu-style lickable treats for training or calming
- ✅ Small amounts of cooked fish (no bones, no seasoning)
- ✅ Freeze-dried meat treats made specifically for cats



# Kitten Toys

Kittens explore the world through play, pouncing, and pawing—and just like puppies, they'll often get themselves into mischief if not given appropriate outlets for their energy. Play is essential not only for burning off energy, but also for developing coordination, confidence, and the bond between you and your kitten.

Kittens also go through a teething phase, so having the right toys on hand helps protect your fingers—and your furniture!

Our top toy picks for curious kittens:

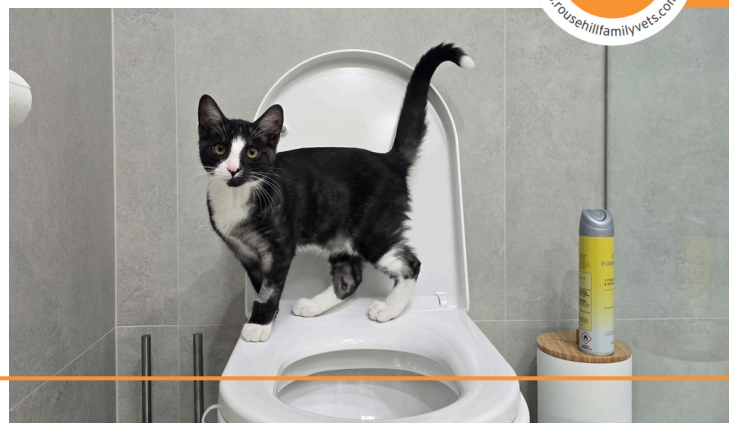
- Interactive wand toys – Great for mimicking prey and encouraging healthy play
- Soft plush mice or balls – Lightweight and perfect for solo batting and chasing
- Tunnels – Fantastic for hiding, darting, and ambushing
- Treat balls or puzzle toys – Engage their brains and provide enrichment
- Catnip or silvertop toys – Safe and fun for most kittens over 3–4 months of age

Rotate toys regularly to keep things fresh and exciting—and always supervise play with strings, ribbons, or feather toys to avoid accidental ingestion.

# Kitten Socialisation

Kittens also go through a critical socialisation window, typically between 2 to 9 weeks of age, but their learning and social development continues well beyond this period. Most kittens come into their new homes around 8–10 weeks old, making it a crucial time to gently expose them to new people, environments, and handling in a safe and positive way.

Even though we don't offer kitten preschool at our clinic, you can support your kitten's development by using positive reinforcement at home. Encourage gentle exploration, reward calm behaviour, and create good associations with new experiences like the vacuum cleaner, nail trims, car rides, and visitors. Handle their paws, ears, and mouth regularly with treats and praise to help prepare them for future vet visits and grooming.

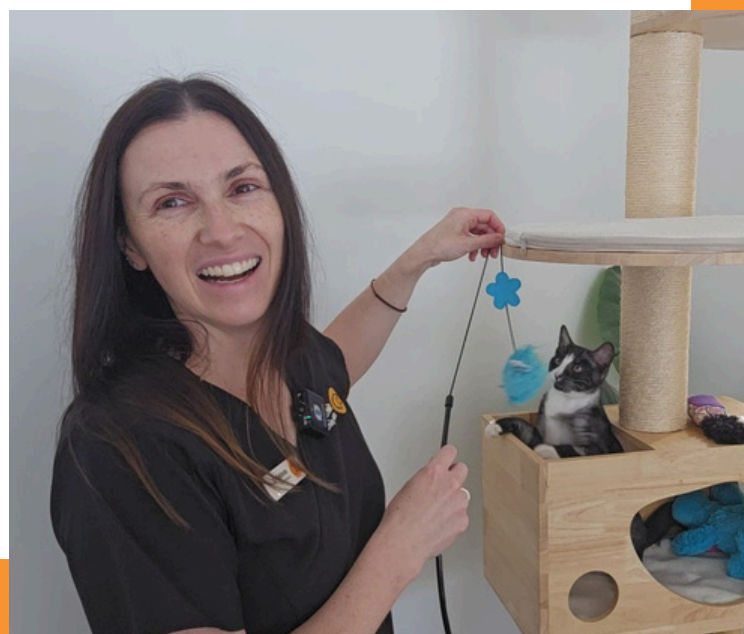


# Litter Training Your Kitten

Most kittens instinctively seek out a litter tray if it's clean, accessible, and in a safe location.

Here's how to help your kitten succeed:

- Use a **large, uncovered litter tray** with low sides so your kitten can easily get in and out
- Place the tray in a **quiet, low-traffic area**, well away from food and water bowls
- Avoid areas near **noisy appliances** (like washing machines or dryers) that might startle your kitten
- **Scoop waste daily**, and fully clean the tray once a week with warm water and mild soap
- Choose a **soft, unscented clumping litter**—strong smells or harsh textures can be off-putting
- If you have more than one cat or kitten, provide **one tray per cat, plus one extra**, in different locations
- Never punish accidents—clean the area thoroughly with an **enzymatic cleaner** and make sure the tray is easy to access



# Pheromones - Feliway

Feliway is a synthetic version of the feline facial pheromone, the same one cats naturally release when they rub their cheeks against you, furniture, or doorways. It helps kittens and cats feel safe, secure, and at ease in their environment.

We recommend using Feliway diffusers from the moment your kitten arrives home. It can help them settle faster, adjust to new surroundings, and feel more relaxed during socialisation and training.

At Rouse Hill Family Vets, we also use Feliway throughout our clinic. Every kitten or cat patient receives a Feliway-sprayed towel in their carrier on arrival, and our consult rooms are equipped with Feliway diffusers to help reduce fear, anxiety, and stress during their visit.



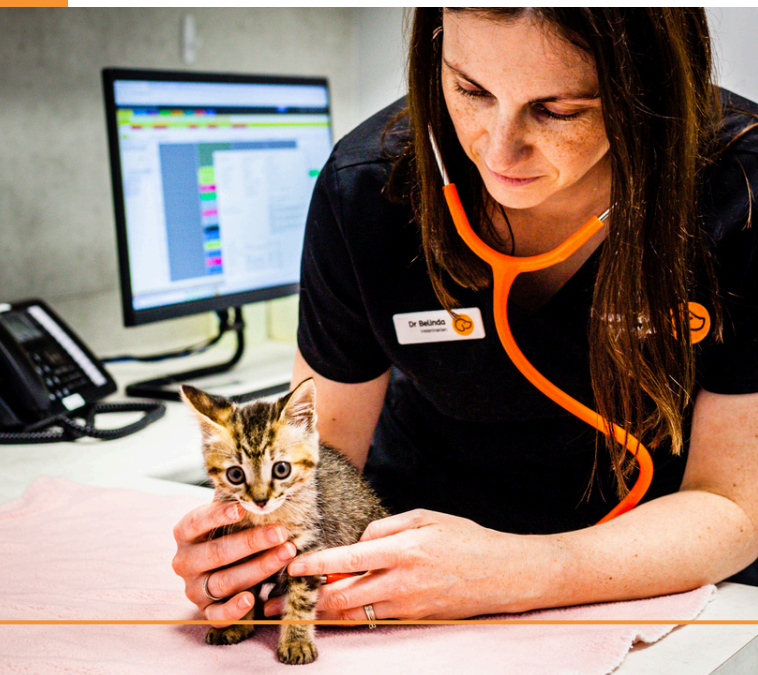
## Pet Insurance

Kittens are naturally curious—and that curiosity can sometimes get them into trouble! Having pet insurance gives you peace of mind, knowing that if something unexpected happens, you're covered for the cost of their care.

Most pet insurance companies in Australia are underwritten by just a few major providers. When choosing a policy for your kitten, we recommend the following:

- Choose a level of cover that suits your family's lifestyle and budget
- Read the fine print - some policies limit the number of consults you can claim per year or set caps on how much they'll pay for specific conditions
- If you'd like dental care included, make sure it's covered in your policy—many do not include dentistry by default
- Behavioural issues are often excluded, so check the details if this is important to you
- Ask if the insurer supports GapOnly, and whether your vet clinic can process these claims (we offer GapOnly for large surgical and hospital bills)
- Consider the claims process - can it be submitted online, or do you need to mail in forms?
- Some insurers allow pet insurance to be added to your personal or home insurance—worth exploring for convenience

We don't recommend any one company over another, but we do encourage you to consider these points when selecting a policy that fits your kitten's needs and your family's preferences.



**Book Online**







## Stress-Free Car Trips for Kittens

Helping your kitten feel calm in the car sets the tone for every vet visit—and it starts with how you use the carrier.

- Leave the carrier out at home with soft bedding, toys, or treats so it feels safe and familiar
- Spray Feliway on the bedding 15–30 minutes before travel to reduce anxiety
- Secure the carrier in the car, ideally on the back seat with a seatbelt looped around it
- Cover the carrier with a towel to block out sights and create a quiet, den-like space
- Speak softly while driving and avoid loud music or sudden stops
- When you arrive at Rouse Hill Family Vets, your kitten will wait in our cat-only waiting area and be seen in a dedicated cat consult room—designed to keep them calm and comfortable

## What makes Rouse Hill Family Vets different?

We do things differently—because your pet deserves more than a rushed, stressful vet visit.

Our clinic is built around the Fear Free approach, and nearly all of our team are officially Fear Free certified. That means every decision we make is designed to reduce fear, anxiety, and stress—for both pets and their people.

Here's how we stand out:

- Longer consults (30 minutes or more) so your pet never feels rushed
- We aim to get you straight into a consult room to avoid stressful waiting room encounters
- Adaptil-sprayed bandanas for dogs, and Feliway in our cat-only consult room and waiting area
- We use low-stress handling—snacks and cuddles are our tools of choice, never force
- All procedures like bloods, nail clips and ear cleans are done with you present
- For surgery, you'll stay with your pet until they're relaxed and sleepy—they'll wake up in a nurse's arms, never alone
- We don't save medication "for last"—pre-visit meds like Gabapentin are commonly used to help anxious pets
- We encourage friendly visits and gradual desensitisation to help nervous pets feel safe

At Rouse Hill Family Vets, we take the time to get it right—so your pet can feel safe, supported, and genuinely cared for at every step.



**Book Online**



# Meet The Vets



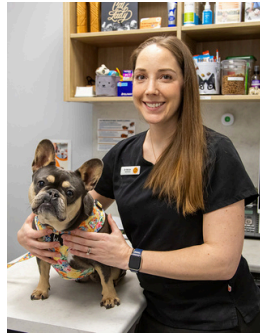
## Dr Belinda

Dr. Belinda Parsons is a veterinarian, certified veterinary acupuncturist, and Certified Canine Rehabilitation Therapist. As the owner of Rouse Hill Family Vets, she has over 19 years of experience in small animal care and is a passionate advocate for senior pet health.

An Elite Certified Fear Free Practitioner, Dr. Belinda champions stress-free veterinary visits, recognising that a pet's emotional wellbeing is just as vital as their physical health. She proactively reduces fear, anxiety, and stress to ensure a more comfortable experience for her patients.

## Dr Nicole

Dr Nicole graduated from Michigan State University in 2010 and has over 20 years of experience in the veterinary industry. She began as a mixed animal vet in the U.S. and Sydney before focusing on small animal practice. Before joining Rouse Hill Family Vets in 2021, she worked as a locum across NSW. She enjoys all aspects of small animal care, with a special interest in dental health, fear-free visits, and senior pet well-being.



## Dr Jade

Dr Jade grew up in Western Sydney and graduated from Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, in 2016 with a dual degree in veterinary biology and veterinary science.

She joined Rouse Hill Family Vets in July 2022 and embraces fear-free principles to create a positive experience for pets and their owners. Passionate about helping anxious pets feel at ease, Jade's key interests include feline medicine, geriatric care, and dermatology.



## Dr Tina

Dr Tina, born and raised in Sydney, graduated from the University of Sydney in 2017 and has worked in small animal practice ever since. Since joining Rouse Hill Family Vets in April 2023, she has embraced fear-free care, helping pets and their owners feel at ease. Her key interests include animal behaviour, soft tissue surgery, and strengthening the human-animal bond.



## Dr Karen

Dr Karen has worked in small animal general practice since graduating from the University of Sydney in 2011, gaining experience across multiple states in Australia.

With a keen interest in behavioural medicine, she has pursued further study and, in 2023, became a Member of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists in Veterinary Behaviour, recognising her expertise in the field. Karen also has a strong interest in dermatology, dentistry, and senior pet care, striving to make life comfortable and enjoyable for pets at every stage.





# About Rouse Hill Family Vets

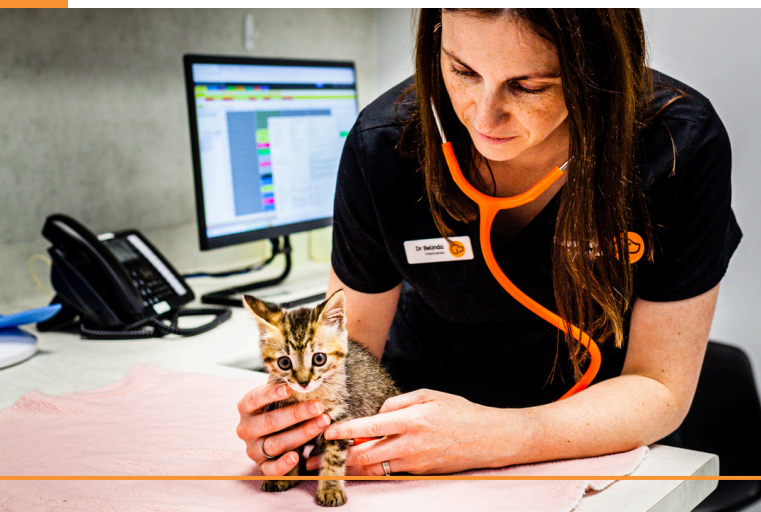
## Circle of Life Petcare

Our driving force has always been to make a difference when it matters the most. Those moments include starting your puppy or kitten off on the right paw, providing preventative care treatments to avoid disease, helping you face a health crisis in your pet or providing a peaceful goodbye for your fur family at home surrounded by those who love them the most. From the beginning to the end of their life, we are with you every step of the way



## Services

- Vaccinations
- Wellness visits
- Dentistry
- Desexing procedures
- Routine and more complex surgical procedures
- In house diagnostics including blood, urine and faecal tests, radiographs, blood pressure, ultrasound and endoscopy.
- Acupuncture
- Laser Therapy
- Rehabilitation Therapy
- Behavioural Consultations
- Dermatology/Allergy Care
- Preventative Care
- Senior Wellness Care
- Palliative Care
- End of Life Care
- Nurse consultations



## Clinic Hours

Monday: 9am - 6pm

Tuesday: 9am - 6pm

Wednesday: 9am - 6pm

Thursday: 9am - 6pm

Friday: 9am - 5pm

Saturday: 9am - 1pm

By Appointment

**Book Online**

