




Kitten socialisation checklist

Kittens need socialisation to help them grow up to be friendly, happy cats.

The goal of socialisation is to ensure your kitten has positive experiences, not neutral or bad ones. Use treats or toys to keep things enjoyable. Socialisation is best done little and often so your kitten isn't overwhelmed. If you feel that your kitten is scared or unsure, stop for the day.

This checklist can be used to track what your kitten has been introduced to. You don't have to tick everything off but the more the better!

Kitten socialisation checklist:

SCORE	RESPONSE	NEXT STEPS
	Relaxed, playful, explores	Keep up the good work!
	Won't approach, freezes	Add more distance/lower the volume Pair with treats or toys
	Hisses, scratches, bites, struggles or hides	Stop for the day <i>Next time try:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> starting further away or at lower volume pairing with treats or toys



Keep your kitten safe!

Until they are fully vaccinated only introduce your kitten to healthy, vaccinated cats, such as those in your home, and keep them away from surfaces where unvaccinated cats may have been.



HANDLING	Exposure			Notes
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Specific task				
Being picked up				
Holding kitten in your lap				
Cradling in your arms on their back				
Checking the ears				
Examining mouth/brushing teeth				
Trimming claws (or pretending)				
Wearing a collar				
Brushing				
Wiping with a towel				

PEOPLE*	Exposure			Notes
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Specific task				
Women				
Men				
People of various ethnicities				
Elderly				
Children				
People with disabilities				
People wearing hats/helmets				
People wearing glasses/sunglasses				
People wearing hoodies or backpacks				

** Don't allow people to grab at the kitten or force them to interact. Kittens should be allowed to approach people on their own and get treats for coming up. Another great way to interact is playing with wand toys.*

OTHER ANIMALS	Exposure			Notes
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Specific task				
Friendly, vaccinated cats				
Friendly, calm dogs				
Poultry/birds/ducks				
Other animals				

**Remember – avoid your kitten coming into contact with unknown or unvaccinated cats.*

SOUNDS*	Exposure			Notes
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Specific task				
Thunder				
Fireworks				
Vacuum cleaner				
Washing machine/dryer				
Traffic (like downtown in a city)				
Sirens				
Dogs barking				
Doorbells/door knocking				
Babies crying				
Kids playing				
Pots clanging (kitchen sounds)				

**Videos can be used. Begin at low levels and, provided the kittens have a positive response, you can gradually increase the volume, making sure to pair with treats.*

SURFACES	Exposure			Notes
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Specific task				
Soft floors (e.g. carpet or bath mat)				
Slippery surfaces (e.g. laminate flooring)				
Stairs				
Grass*				
Unstable surfaces				

**Remember – avoid your kitten coming into contact with areas where unvaccinated cats may have been.*

PLACES*	Exposure			Notes
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Specific task				
Cat carrier (left open to explore)				
Cat carrier (temporarily closed)				
Car rides (gradually increase time)				
Veterinary clinic				
Kitten socialisation classes				

**Remember – avoid your kitten coming into contact with areas where unvaccinated cats may have been.*