



Information Pack

Kitten Care

Looking after your kitten is very important. Listed below are the brand of food and litter we use. It is important to use these products before you introduce anything different as this could upset your kitten. We recommend slowly introducing any other products to ensure your kitten can adjust easily. There are links below to websites that gives you information on feeding and looking after your kitten. If at any time you are concerned for your kitten, or you have any questions, please consult with your veterinarian.

What you will need:

- Royal Canin Mother & Baby cat dry biscuits and wet food.
- Breeders Choice recycled paper cat litter and litter tray.
- Carry crate to pick your kitten up in.
- Water bowl.
- Toys.
- Scratching post.
- Cardboard box.
- Pet blanket.

Feeding

Here, at British Shorthairs Australia, we feed our cats and kittens nothing but the best. Royal Canin supplies the best nutrition for cats and kittens, specifically the British Shorthair. We feed our kittens Royal Canin Mother & Baby cat wet food and dry biscuits. Along with available water at all times your kittens should be happy! If you choose to change from feeding your kitten Royal Canin please slowly introduce the new food into their diet as it can sometimes upset their stomach. If you have any further questions about feeding your kitten please consult your veterinarian.

Where to buy this product:

<http://www.royalcanin.com.au/products/products/cat-products/where-to-buy-our-product>

Litter

We use Breeders Choice cat litter as it is a recycled paper pellets that is suitable for cats and small kittens. You can purchase this at the local supermarket or pet store.

Worming and Flea treatments

Please worm, tick and flea treat your kitten on a monthly basis and on the advice of your veterinarian. Your kittens last worm treatment is listed on the back of their vet card.

Veterinary Information

Your kitten's microchip, vaccinations, worming, vet checks and de-sexing details are all included in the vet file card. You will receive this via mail once your kitten is picked up. Please refer to this to see when they are due for their next vaccinations and worming. Please seek any further advice from your veterinarian.

Arriving home for the first time

Kittens need to find their bearings when first entering your home. We recommend keeping them in a safe place for the first week. Place a box, toys, scratching post, litter tray, food and water all within this area. Let your kitten get used to the smells, noises and people of your house. Give them time to feel like they now where home is and that this is where they belong. Of course give them lots of cuddles too! It can take some time for your kitten to adjust to such a big change.

Websites

Here are some useful websites that you may like to look at for information:

<http://www.royalcanin.com.au/>

<http://healthypets.royalcanin.com.au/cat/cat-breeds/british-shorthair/>

<https://www.royalcanin.com/au/cats/thinking-of-getting-a-cat/how-to-care-for-a-kitten-or-cat>

<https://www.purina.com.au/kittens/ownership>

<https://icatcare.org/>

We are here to help. If at any time you have a question about your kitten, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are happy to answer your questions.

History

The origins of the British Shorthair most likely date back to the first century AD, making it one of the most ancient identifiable [cat](#) breeds in the world. It is thought that the invading Romans initially brought Egyptian domestic cats to Great Britain. These cats then interbred with the local European wildcat population. Over the centuries, their naturally isolated descendants developed into distinctively large, robust cats with a short but very thick coat, to better withstand conditions on their native islands. Based on artists' representations, the modern British Shorthair is unchanged from this initial type.

An early example of the "English type" Blue Shorthair, from Frances Simpson's *Book of the Cat*, 1903

Selective breeding of the best examples of the type began in the nineteenth century, with emphasis on developing the unusual blue-grey variant called the "British Blue" or "English type" (to distinguish it from the more fine-boned "Russian type"). Some sources directly credit UK artist, and pioneering cat fancier, Harrison Weir with the initial concept of standardizing the breed. Others suggest a group of breeders may have been involved. The new British Shorthair was featured at the first-ever cat show, organised by Weir and held at the Crystal Palace in London in 1871, and enjoyed great initial popularity.

By the 1890s, with the advent of the newly imported Persian and other long-haired breeds, the British Shorthair had fallen out of favour, and breeding stock had become critically rare

by World War I. At least partially to alleviate this, British Shorthair breeders mixed Persians into their bloodlines. The genes thus introduced would eventually become the basis for the British Longhair. At the time, any long-haired cats produced were placed into the Persian breeding program. As all cats with the blue colouration were then judged together as variants on a de facto single breed. The Blue Shorthair, outcrossing's of the British with the Russian Blue were also common.

A young British Blue male showing the copper eyes typical of cats with 'blue' fur. After the war, in an attempt to maintain the breed standard, the GCCF decided to accept only third-generation Persian/British Shorthair crosses. This contributed to another shortage of pure breeding stock by World War II, at which point the Persian and Russian Blue were reintroduced into the mix. British Shorthair breeders also worked with the French Chartreux, another ancient breed, which although genetically unrelated to the British Blue, is a very similar cat in appearance. Breeders worked to re-establish the true British type, and by the late 1970s, the distinctive British Shorthair had achieved formal recognition from both the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) and The International Cat Association (TICA). According to the GCCF's 2013 registry data, it is once again the most popular pedigreed breed in its native country.

Description - Appearance

A fully mature British Blue male, showing the characteristic heavy jowls and unique "crisp" texture of the coat.

The British Shorthair is a relatively powerful-looking large cat, having a broad chest, strong thick-set legs with rounded paws and a medium-length, blunt-tipped tail. The head is relatively large and rounded, with a short muzzle, broad cheeks (most noticeable in mature males, who tend to develop prominent jowls) and large round eyes that are deep coppery orange in the British Blue and otherwise vary in colour depending on the coat. Their large ears are broad and widely set.

The 'British Blue' variant can often be confused with the grey **Scottish Fold**. However, the **Shorthair** can be characterised by having its pointy triangle ears, whereas the **Fold** has softer, folded ears.

They are slow to mature in comparison with most cat breeds, reaching full physical development at approximately three years of age. Unusually among domestic cats they are a noticeably sexually dimorphic breed, with males averaging 9–17 lb (4.1–7.7 kg) and females 7–12 lb (3.2–5.4 kg).

Coat, colour and patterns

The British Shorthair's coat is one of the breed's defining features. It is very dense but does not have an undercoat; thus, the texture is plush rather than woolly or fluffy, with a firm, "crisp" pile that breaks noticeably over the cat's body as it moves.

Although the British Blue remains the most familiar variant, British Shorthairs have been developed in many other colours and patterns. Black, blue, white, red, cream, silver, golden and—most recently—cinnamon and fawn are accepted by all official standards, either solid or in colourpoint, tabby, shaded and bicour patterns; the GCCF, FIFe and TICA also accept chocolate and its dilute lilac. All colours and patterns also have tortoiseshell variants.

The Tabby patterns include: Classic Tabby, Mackerel Tabby, Spotted & Ticked Tabby. The non-tabby patterns include: Tortoiseshell, Bi-Colour, Van patterns Bi-Colour & White, Smoke, Tipped & Colour-pointed.

Temperament

They are an easy-going and dignified breed, not as active and playful as many but sweet-natured and devoted to their owners, making them a favourite of animal trainers. They tend to be safe around other pets and children since they will tolerate a fair amount of physical interaction, but as a rule do not like to be picked up or carried. They require only minimal grooming and take well to being kept as indoor-only cats; however, they can be prone to obesity unless care is taken with their diet. They like to be around you but not necessarily on top of you. In saying this, they all have their own loveable personalities!

Health and Lifespan

Consider the British Shorthair as a long-lived cat, with a life expectancy of 14–20 years.

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) can be a problem in the breed.

The breed is thought to be at high risk of polycystic kidney disease (PKD).

Establish a relationship with your vet

It is important to have a good relationship with your vet so your kitten gets the best care possible. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate in contacting your vet for advice.

Legal requirements of pet ownership

Pets must be microchipped and lifetime registered with local councils. Please see your local council website for details, costs and requirements and be sure to lifetime register your kitten.

Advantages of de-sexing

The NSW Government encourages pet owners to de-sex cats and dogs at an early age. This helps to ensure pets stay healthy, are well behaved and do not have unwanted litters. The Government continues to provide funding to support discounted registration fees for de-sexed animals.

The discounted registration fee is available to owners who de-sex their cat before four (4) months of age.

Cost to register your kitten

Registration fees will be different from state to state and council to council so please check your state or council registration fees.

Socially Responsible Pet Ownership

What do I need to know before I get a new pet?

For many Australians a pet is an important part of the family. While owning a pet can be extremely rewarding, it is important to remember that pet ownership is also a huge responsibility. As a pet owner you will be committed to providing for all the requirements of your pet – food, exercise, housing, grooming and veterinary care. It is absolutely essential to thoroughly research the basics of pet care before acquiring any new pet to ensure you have the capacity to meet the physiological, behavioural and social needs of the animal.

It is recommended that you take the time to research the species or breed/crossbreed you are purchasing well before bringing them home, so that you are positive your choice of pet will be appropriate for your lifestyle and you are well prepared for their arrival.

Purchasing a pet should never be an impulsive decision. RSPCA shelters receive thousands of unwanted and abandoned animals each year and these are often the result of an ill-considered decision. Before you make the decision to become a pet owner ask yourself the following questions:

Am I prepared to care for a pet for its whole life?

The average lifespan of dogs and cats is around 12 years, with some dogs and cats living until 15 or even 20 years of age so it's a long-term commitment. While puppies and kittens are irresistibly adorable, you will need to be prepared to provide for an adult animal too and, in the case of some dogs, a much larger animal with considerable exercise requirements and a sizeable appetite.

Can I afford a pet?

There are many costs involved with pet ownership. Upfront costs for cats and dogs include vaccination, microchipping and de-sexing. However, you will need to be prepared to pay for ongoing costs associated with food, worming, annual health checks, vet bills, training, boarding, toys and bedding for the life of the animal. If an emergency or accident occurs, you will also need to ensure you can pay for any emergency veterinary treatment required.

The costs of pet ownership will vary depending on the type of animal you choose. Remember that pets can be an expensive addition to the family.

Do I understand how to care for a pet?

It is your responsibility, as a pet owner, to thoroughly research the basic requirements of your chosen pet. You should do this before considering purchasing your pet and prior to bringing your pet home so that you are well informed about the species-specific needs of your pet and so you're ready to take good care of them. You could look for a comprehensive book about your chosen species and other information about your chosen breed/crossbreed.

Do I have time to care for a pet?

Caring for a pet takes a considerable amount of time each and every day. Exercise, socialisation, grooming, feeding, reward-based training, play time and providing company and attention are all critical aspects of pet ownership. Some pets will require more of your time than others but each pet will require daily care so you need to be sure you have time available each day. Puppies and kittens are a particularly large time investment.

Do I live in suitable accommodation with adequate space for a pet?

First carefully consider if you can provide suitable accommodation for your pet both now and well into the future. Are you allowed to keep pets at your current residence? Your home size and/or garden size are factors in determining your suitability as a pet owner for certain types of animals. If you're thinking about getting a dog – do you have a yard? Is it secure? If you don't have a yard, where will your dog be housed when you're not at home? If it is inside, where will the dog go to the toilet? Can you get home to let it outside every few hours?

If you rent your property has your landlord given you written permission to have a dog or other pet? What will happen if you have to move?

Will a pet fit into my lifestyle and priorities?

Working hours, a busy social life and taking regular trips away are all factors that need to be carefully considered before purchasing a pet. Companion animals thrive on human company and will always depend on you. You must be sure that your lifestyle will accommodate them. Before you purchase a pet consider their specific requirements. Are you prepared to walk your dog everyday? Are you home often enough to keep your cat or dog company and give them attention? Do you have time to give your puppy or kitten the basic reward-based training it needs? Who will care for your pet when you are away from home?

It is also important to think about future planning for your pet if something happens to you. Make future plans that will ensure that your pet is looked after if you pass away or can no longer look after them due to ill health or moving into a care home where pets cannot join you.

We also like to stay in contact with new kitten owners to see how they grow!
So, don't forget to send us some updated photos!

Kind regards,

Holly Gaddes

British Shorthairs Australia



