
Be a Responsible Cat Owner

How hard can it be? Cats can take care of themselves, right? Being a responsible cat owner simply means keeping him/her indoors, providing him with companionship, having him/her spayed or neutered, keeping a collar with identification on your pet, and meeting his needs of food, water, and veterinary care.

Your Roaming Cat

When allowed to roam, cats can get into garbage cans, defecate in flower beds and sandboxes, and contribute to pet overpopulation. They can also have a devastating effect on local wildlife - killing dozens of songbirds and small mammals each year.

However, the most important reason to keep your cat indoors is for his/her own safety. By going outdoors, cats face diseases, cat fights, dog fights, poisons, parasites, cruel people, and the biggest killer of all - traffic.

You can help keep your cat's indoor environment "cat friendly" by providing him with a scratching post, planting pots of indoor greens for him to chew on, adopting another animal to keep him company, providing cat toys (especially with catnip inside), and most importantly, by playing games and spending time with your pet.

Spaying and Neutering

The single most important step you can take to be a responsible pet owner is to have your new pet spayed or neutered. Spaying your female cat means having her uterus and ovaries surgically removed. To neuter your male cat is to have his testicles removed.

The result of having this surgery performed is that your pet will no longer be able to bring more homeless animals into the world. This fact alone is so important because over 4 million dogs and cats must be humanely destroyed each year due to a lack of homes for them all.

Spaying eliminates the possibility of uterine or ovarian cancer and greatly reduces the incidence of breast cancer. Neutering reduces the incidence of prostate cancer and neutered cats are also less likely to spray and mark their territory. Spayed cats will no longer go through heat cycles. Cats who are spayed or neutered make better, more affectionate companions.

Simply put, if you cannot afford to spay or neuter your cat, you can't afford to have a cat.

Keep Your Cat Healthy

Cats require basic care to keep them healthy and happy. A nutritionally balanced diet is important for your cat. Your veterinarian can guide you on an adequate feeding program.

Regular yearly veterinary visits are also a requirement - cats need yearly vaccinations and boosters to remain healthy.

Owning a cat is a lifetime commitment. It is up to you to provide him/her with that "lifetime guarantee."