

# Adopting Kittens in Pairs



Adopting a single kitten or young cat is not a great idea. Trying to keep a single kitten occupied, stimulated, safe and happy while also going about the business of everyday life is much more of a challenge than it may seem upon first consideration. Adopting a pair of kittens can actually end up being less work:

- Many **destructive behaviors** are due to **boredom** or **separation anxiety**. A built-in playmate naturally provides the stimulation and security needed to reduce the potential for neurotic behaviors to develop.
- Kitten-to-kitten interaction and playtime are actually valuable educational opportunities to help them develop important **social skills** that will be needed later in life. They learn how to communicate and interpret each other's signals, how hard to bite during playtime and how to share territory.
- Many people are under the false impression that cats are solitary and don't want companionship but they do have a social structure and most truly benefit and thrive when they have a feline buddy. Most cats, regardless of age, are **highly social** and are happier living with other cat companions (or sometimes with a dog or rabbit).
- Kittens are **active at night**. A single kitten may awaken you with jumping, pouncing and other hunting behavior. However, two kittens will occupy each other by finding interesting shadows to chase and games to play until they finally tire and fall asleep, too.
- It's normal and appropriate for kittens to "**play bite**" and wrestle with each other. Without a litter mate or other kitten to play with, a kitten will bite and wrestle with you, which is unacceptable. Even if you allow this behavior from your kitten when it's small, once the kitten matures, your adult cat will have learned these bad habits. If your kitten grows up with another kitten, this negative behavior is minimized.
- When it comes to toys and cat furniture, your biggest expense will be a cat tree (I highly recommend that you get one) and you'd have that expense regardless of whether you adopted one kitten or two. And if you're at all familiar with cats, you know that some of the best cat furniture are empty cardboard boxes.
- Think twice about bringing a kitten home to a senior feline resident. A kitten may have too much energy for an older cat. Kittens want to play and run constantly and **require a lot of interaction**. This may overwhelm and irritate an older cat, and the kitten may be frustrated her elderly companion doesn't have her energy level. This makes two very unhappy cats, and behavior problems. Long-term, the two may never have a close relationship because their initial experience with one another was negative. An older cat is better matched with someone of her own age and temperament.
- Since **adult cats are territorial**, the introduction process often requires some finesse and lots of patience. In many cases, the pet parents had originally thought about adopting two kittens at once but were concerned about the added work. In reality, a second kitten wouldn't have added much extra work at all and the benefits of companionship would've greatly enriched both cats' lives. Starting off now with two feline youngsters is much easier than adding a second adult cat down the road.