

Cat Feeding Guide

What to feed my cat

It is important that the cat's diet is a complete and balanced diet.

Your case managers and HAR admin will provide you with food for the cat you are fostering. As these are donations, they are not always gold standard diets. However, please do not feed the cat any other foods without consulting with your case manager first.

Many human foods are toxic to cats. Do not feed your cats human food.

How much to feed my cat

See link for feeding guide for your cat

<https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/feeding-times-and-frequency-for-cats#:~:text=Cats%20should%20eat%20at%20least,can%20become%20hyperacidic%20causing%20nausea.>

It depends on the age, breed, activity & the type/brand of food it is eating.

Always feed the cat based on the weight and the instructions on the food packet.

What is the weight of the cat?

If you don't have that information try & compare to something. Big cats can be up to 5kg and smaller cats 2-3kg. It is better to under-estimate than overestimate as many cats get overfed.

See the back of the food packets to determine how much to give. If you are unsure, please ask your case manager.

Cats have stomachs like humans and will get hungry after 8/9 hours, always feed twice a day morning and night. Please note some young kittens may require additional feeding.

Some cats are grazers and will not finish their meals in one go, that is fine, just make sure they only get given their daily amounts as per the feeding guide. Discard any food not eaten in the day to ensure your cat always has fresh and healthy food available.

See link for guide on how often to feed your cat

<https://www.preventivevet.com/cats/how-much-and-how-often-to-feed-your-cat#:~:text=As%20a%20general%20average%20if,approximately%20between%20167%E2%80%93250%20calories.>

How much to feed the kitten

Kittens need to eat small meals several times a day. The more meals the better, just make sure they only get their daily required amounts offered. How they are fed as kittens will set them up for life!

Make sure the food available for them is fresh. Do not leave wet food out for longer than 15 minute intervals. Keep wet food in the fridge when opened. Dry food needs to be completely changed in a 24hr period if not fully consumed.

How to feed my cat

Imagine if you had the same meal, from the same bowl, that was always full and just sat there. Now imagine that's the case but your genetics are of a wild animal and your ancestors would hunt food! Now that can cause issues. Research has shown cats that are free fed are bored, can have behavioral issues & weight issues.

This is why we recommend enrichment feeding. Enrichment is just a fancy word for meeting your cats needs, we want it to be enriching and enjoyable for them that works their brain and senses. Once you have worked out how much your cat needs to eat, we can then distribute that food.

In the wild cats will hunt their food, play with their food, eat it, groom themselves and then sleep. The more we mimic this, research shows the cats are happier and healthier. A simple way to do this is by playing with the cat with a wand toy for 2 minutes and throwing kibble down for them to get. You can also play with them and then place down an enrichment feeder toy.

Rotate the “ways to feed” to ensure your cat does not get bored of the different ways to be fed.

Ways to enrichment feed

- In a puzzle feeder
- In a snuffle mat
- In folded over toilet rolls
- In an old tea towel rolled over
- In closed egg cartons with holes
- Plastic bottles with holes
- Food scattered throughout the home for them to find
- Throwing it for them to chase
- Slow feeders

See links for ways to enrichment feed:

<http://foodpuzzlesforcats.com/homemade-puzzles>

<https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&catId=102901&id=9956352>

Examples of enrichment feeding



Toilet roll with dry cat food with holes & on string. The movement tied to string makes it extra fun and challenging.

Toilet roll with ends folded over filled with dry cat food to roll & shake around.



A puzzle toy with challenging grooves and spaces filled with dry cat food.