

# FEAR FREE KITTEN SOCIALIZATION



## Making Exposure Positive

Use these bingo squares for ideas on how to socialize your kitten. Socialization and exposure are active processes that are most crucial from two to seven weeks of age but should be practiced well beyond this age range. However, it's important to realize that socialization is not simply about exposure-it's about making it fun and positive from the start.

Think of these experiences as a behavioral investment, like placing pennies in a piggy bank. When done properly, your investment will result in a friendly and outgoing cat. Positive, proactive socialization involves liberal use of food treats (or, for some kittens, interactive play with a toy/attention/petting) to help form positive associations.

Fun Visit at Veterinary Hospital (and grooming salon)	Have visitors to your home	Take your kitten to a friend's or relative's house for a kitten party	Strive for your kitten to meet at least one new person a day during the first 14 weeks	See someone carrying something in hand, such as an umbrella
Explore a minimum of 5 food puzzle toys	Teach your kitten how to play with you	See children playing from a distance	Pair brushing with getting treats	Introduce your kitten to a variety of sounds in a controlled manner
Allow your kitten to experience a minimum of 5 novel non-toxic and non-noxious scents	Discover your kitten's preference for a scratching post and reward her with a treat or a play for using it	Go for a ride in a car within a secured carrier	Acclimate your kitten to wearing a cat harness and leash	Acclimate your kitten to having a towel placed over her
See or meet an adult dog who is healthy, friendly, and relaxed around cats	Walk on 3 different safe and sturdy surfaces such as wood, gravel, sand, metal, concrete, rubber, etc	See and/or meet a person with mobility assistance (wheelchair, walker, crutches)	Acclimate your kitten to a multilevel cat cage	Allow your kitten to explore at least 5 novel objects at her own pace
Taste at least 5 different types of kitten food and treats (dry and canned varieties)	Be exposed to a recording of fireworks at a low and controlled volume	Teach your kitten to love her travel carrier	Teach your kitten to enjoy taking medication (see Pill Your Pet with Kindness handout)	Touch your kitten on various body parts and give her a treat each time



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