



Why Kittens & Young Cats Should Be Adopted In Pairs

At **Angels Among Us Pet Rescue**, our goal is to ensure that the animals adopted from our program are getting a home for life. For that reason, we very much encourage people to adopt two kittens instead of a single one.

Please consider the following points:

- A kitten learns a lot in the first several months of life from its mother and littermates. Separating a kitten from its mother is often a necessity in order for it to be adopted, but taking it away from its littermates can delay the kitten's development emotionally, socially and sometimes physically. Kittens who are able to remain with one of their littermates or a similarly-aged companion, tend to be healthier and happier, and in the long run, better socialized pets than those who are isolated from other kittens at an early age.
- Anyone who has observed kittens knows they want to bite and wrestle with one another. This behavior is normal. You cannot keep a kitten from doing what comes naturally anymore than you can force a two-year old toddler to sit still. In the absence of having a feline companion its own age to play with, this is precisely what a single kitten will want to do with you. This type of behavior from a kitten may be cute and tolerable, but you will end up with an adult cat with very bad habits (for example, biting and scratching as “play”).
- Kittens are curious and crave constant stimulation. A single, bored kitten will often entertain itself by chewing on plants, climbing drapes, climbing furniture, unrolling toilet paper, exploring electrical cords and sockets, etc. They are particularly active at night, when the owners are trying to sleep. This is not to say that kittens who live with other kittens won't also sometimes do these things, but if they have another kitten to tumble around and play with, it is less likely that they will need to entertain themselves with behaviors like these, which are destructive and can be dangerous.
- Humans are not an adequate substitute for a cat in lieu of one of its own kind. A pair of kittens will still want to interact with the owner, but can keep each other occupied

while the owner is doing such necessary tasks as sleeping, working, housecleaning, etc. Most cats, regardless of their age, are highly sociable and are truly happier living with other cat companions. This in turn makes them better pets, which results in happier owners.

- If there is an older cat in the household, a kitten should not be brought in as a lone companion. A youngster has boundless energy, which is likely to overwhelm and irritate an older cat. Likewise, a kitten is apt to be frustrated that its companion does not have the same energy level as itself. At the very least, this can lead to two very unhappy cats. Behavioral problems such as litter box avoidance or destructive scratching can occur if one or both cats take out their frustrations on their surroundings. Longer term, it is almost certain that the two will never have a close, bonded relationship, since their experiences with each other will be negative from the beginning. An older cat is better matched with someone of his or her own age, who has a similar temperament.

In summary, 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 at first blush. However, providing a companion of the same age will greatly increase the chances you will have two healthy, happy, and well-adjusted pets.

Adapted from the website of Chicago Paws.



Angels Kittens Bebe and Jimi