

What should I feed my cat?

The pet food market has exploded in recent years with new foods coming on the market every week! It can be confusing to figure out which is the best food to feed your new family member.

Kittens, like children, are quite plastic and malleable and are open to new textures and flavours. Get your new kitten used to all kinds of textures including wet food, dry food and cooked meat. This may help ensure that your cat is less fussy as an adult if you have to switch their food or feed certain foods if they are unwell. If you do need to change your cat's diet you can check out my top tips to do so [here](#).

TOP TIP!

Many cats vomit their food. This is often a sign of a food allergy, changing your cat's diet to a low allergy diet is often all that is needed to help. Watch my video [here](#) to find out more.

Choose good quality food for your cat. These are foods that have a high protein content and a low carbohydrate content. As a general rule, cat foods that you buy at the supermarket are not very good quality - so in general if the food is available for sale at the supermarket, it is likely to be a low quality food. I recommend buying your pet food elsewhere, *if it is within your budget*. More premium brands are for sale at your vet clinic or in pet shops, either in person or online. There are an increasing number of subscription foods that you buy online that get delivered to your home that are also good quality. Low quality foods are often the reason your cat may be vomiting or underweight.

All kittens should be fed kitten food initially, they can then be transitioned to adult food from 9-12 months of age.

Food and teeth:

Regular dry food is no better or worse for your cat's teeth compared to wet food

Dental dry food can help your cat's teeth, but they need to eat a lot of it for it to help

Raw food may benefit teeth if your cat needs to chew on bone

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It is ok to feed both wet and dry foods to cats. Please be aware that many wet foods are not complete foods, instead they are complementary. Complementary foods are foods that do not have all of the nutrients that your cat needs. You can learn more about this in my video [here](#).

Ensure that complementary food is not the only food you feed as it is not nutritionally complete and this can result in nutritional deficiencies. You can check the label on the packet to see if the food is complete or complementary. You should feed no more than 30-40% complementary food to your cat. You can learn more in this [video](#).



Some cats refuse to eat wet food. In this case, do keep offering wet food and try different brands. If your cat still refuses, you can try soaking your cat's dry food in water. Make sure you provide lots of water stations and a water fountain so that your cat has plenty of opportunities to drink.

I recommend that you feed both wet and dry food to your cat, or wet food only. Ideally cats should not be fed a dry food only diet as they do not get enough water. *This may affect kidney health and may be why we see so many cats with kidney disease as they get older.* Dry food also contains more calories compared to wet food, so cats who eat only dry food have a tendency to be overweight, which can contribute to diabetes and cystitis. Cats who only eat dry food are also more prone to cystitis because they consume less water compared to cats who eat both wet and dry food or wet food only.

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What's the deal with raw food?

There has been a huge spike in interest in feeding raw food in recent years. So far, we do not have enough long term studies to know if feeding raw food is any better or worse for your cat compared to a commercial wet diet. Below are the dos and don'ts of raw food feeding.

Do feed a commercial complete raw food diet, this is one that contains all the nutrients that your cat needs to stay healthy

Do be aware that raw food contains bacteria such as salmonella, e coli and mycobacteria, so care is needed, especially with small children, elderly or sick people in your home when handling meat and food bowls

Don't feed raw food to your cat if they have significant illness, as the bacteria found in raw meat may make them ill if their immune system is compromised

Do be aware that bits of sharp bone in raw food can be a choking risk to cats fed raw food, check your cat's food before offering it to them to make sure it is safe

Don't try to prepare a complete raw food diet at home, cats have a complex metabolism and can develop serious metabolic and skeletal disease if fed a diet that is not complete and balanced, some cats even die

Do worm your cat regularly if feeding raw food as raw meat can contain worms

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