

# The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy

## Giving Cats Care Forever!



### Choosing a Pedigree Kitten

A kitten, which will soon grow into an adult cat, is for life and it is well worth spending some time considering what breed is right for you.

Do you need a lively type of kitten, a show-off and an extrovert? If so, the foreign shorthairs are more likely to suit your needs.

If you fancy the quieter longhairs, the question you need to answer is, have you the time and patience needed to groom one? This must be done on a regular basis from the day you bring home a longhaired kitten. If you or members of your family are sensitive to cat hairs you may be better with a shorthaired kitten or none at all.

A cat show is a good place to see the various breeds of cat but **DO NOT** take a cat home from a show as there is a risk of infection. If you see a cat or kitten you want to buy, arrange to take it one or two weeks after the show.

Are you likely to be leaving your kitten alone for more than two or three hours a day? In this case it could be sensible and kinder to buy two for company. You should get them together or within a few weeks of each other. **(You should never go out and leave a cat or kitten shut out of the house).**

If you are elderly, you should consider that you may easily trip over a lively young kitten. Would you be better giving a home to an older and quieter unwanted cat? There are often unwanted cats of all breeds that need kind permanent homes. The secretary of the club for your chosen breed will be able to give you more information. The GCCF will supply you with his/her telephone number.

A kitten, whether pedigree or not, is your responsibility from the moment you acquire it, needing your care and protection for the rest of its life. It is not merely something to feed, give attention when you feel like it and put outside when it suits your purpose.

When you have decided on your choice of breed contact the club which caters for that breed, or your local cat club, and ask if they have a kitten list or details of breeders. (The GCCF can put you in contact with club secretaries). You may find what you want in your area, but you may have to wait and/or be prepared to travel some distance to meet your exact requirements.

Telephone some breeders and get an idea of the price of kittens. Avoid having a kitten on "breeding terms"; this is likely to lead to discord later on. Kittens should be sold with at least an enteritis inoculation and a full course of cat flu inoculations. They should also be registered with the GCCF and have a written pedigree supplied with the registration details. (If the kitten is not registered, the breeder should supply a mating certificate in addition to the pedigree, so that you can register the kitten yourself.) Make sure all of these are included in the price given and that there are no 'hidden' extras. Kittens should be at least 13 weeks old before they leave the breeder. 13-14 weeks is probably the best age, especially for all foreign breeds.

You may wish to see more than one litter before you make your choice. **Never go from one breeder to another without a wash and a change of clothing as you could be the cause of cross infection.**

Always make an appointment with the breeder before you visit and let him/her know if you change your plans. Breeders should be happy to show their kittens without compelling you to buy. However, don't expect a breeder to keep a kitten for you indefinitely. You may be expected to pay a non-returnable deposit if the kitten is to be kept for any length of time after it is ready to go to a new home.

You will often find that one kitten in particular will appeal to you and will, in fact, select you as its new owner.

Ask to see where the kittens are usually kept and to see the 'Mum'. Watch for signs of sickness, diarrhoea, sticky eyes or stuffy nose. **Never choose a sickly, lethargic or weakling kitten out of pity.**

If you visit a breeder and you are worried about the way they are breeding and/or the condition of the cats and kittens, please write to the GCCF Office, with full details. It will then be possible to give the breeder advice and help, if it is required.

**We recommend you never to buy a kitten from a pet shop.**

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