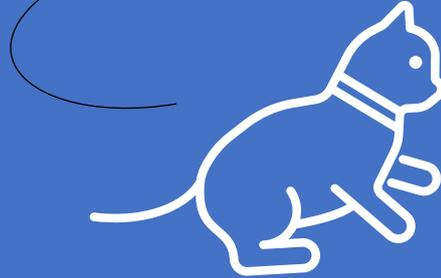


**YOUR BUSINESS NAME**

*Your Logo Goes Here*



# **THE KITTEN MANUAL**

**YOUR KITTEN'S NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Business Name**

Contact details:

Consultation by appointment

Mon - Thurs:

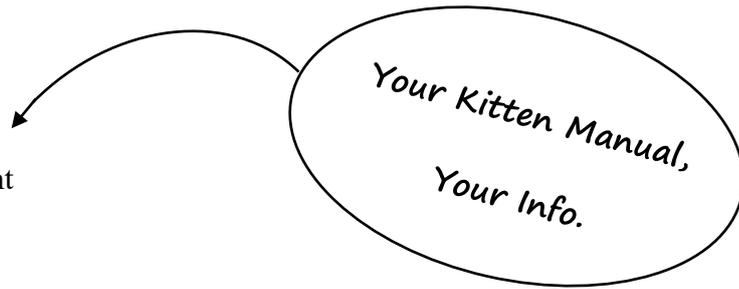
Fri:

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Sun:

Public Holidays:

**AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY CONTACT:**



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Thanks for reading the fine print! The knowledge compiled in this book can be measured in years of experience, endless hours of reading, research, conferences and courses, and a vast quantity of time spent with small, furry creatures possessed with needle-sharp claws and warm, fluffy bodies. A lot has gone into it, so if you'd like to use this material in some way, or to order or purchase similar documents, please email me (I'm friendly!) at [contactpetperspective@gmail.com](mailto:contactpetperspective@gmail.com). The remaining bit of this copyright notice says all the usual stuff. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the author, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, or ordering and purchasing of similar products, please email the author.

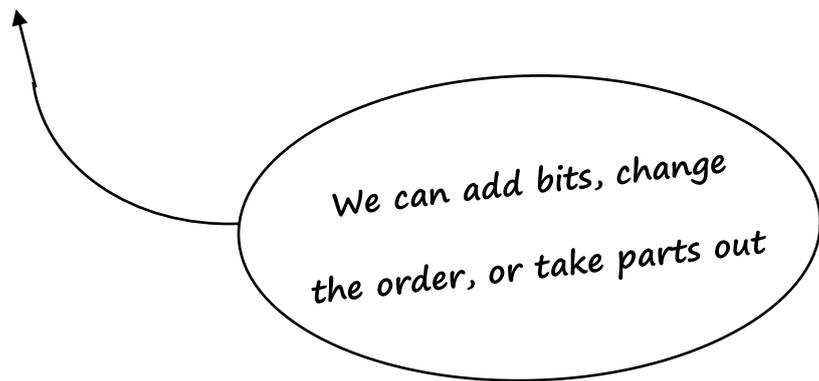
Pet Perspective  
[www.petperspective.com.au](http://www.petperspective.com.au)

Designed for Your Business 2021

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*We can add bits, change  
the order, or take parts out*

# Congratulations!

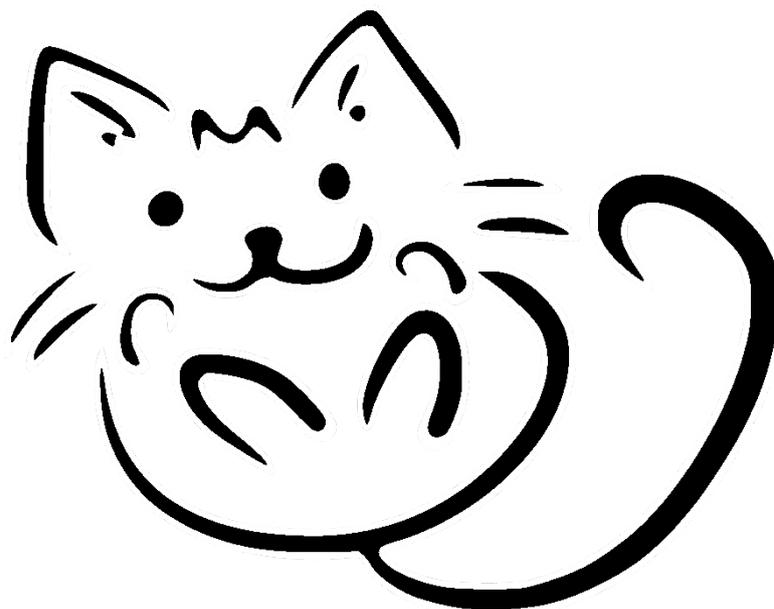
You have a new furry friend! Your Business invites you (and your kitten) to enjoy our Kitten Manual, where you will learn lots of handy hints about understanding and teaching your new feline friend. We aim to make teaching fun for everyone, so you can enjoy the learning process as much as your kitten. We use methods based on positive reinforcement of ‘good’ behaviour. Positive reinforcement is a technique used by top trainers, vets and behaviourists worldwide and is the most humane and effective (and fun!) way to teach and learn.

## HOW to Use <sup>Your</sup> This Training Manual

We can even change fonts, or wording.

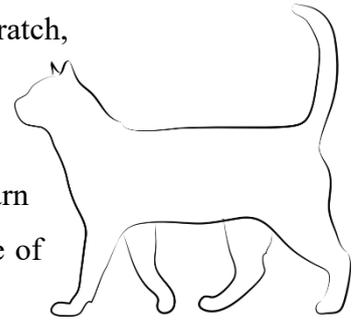
Ideally, we would love you to read all this manual and then pass it around, so everyone in your household can read it too. It contains lots of great information to make sure that you and your kitten have a happy, healthy relationship.

The training manual is more comprehensive than the information given out in our clinic because we have only a limited time to work with. So, please do take the time to read over the notes, because they will really help! The table of contents should help you find any specific information you are looking for.



# Understanding Your Kitten

The *most important thing* that you can learn right now is how to understand what your kitten is feeling. This will help you to know what your kitten really enjoys and feels good about. It will help you to know when your kitten is anxious about something and needs some time or space to explore. Then you can change the environment to make him feel more secure. It is when kittens are anxious that they are more likely to bite, or scratch, especially if they feel that they have no other options (for example when they are cornered, or in your arms, so they can't run away). Cats communicate primarily through body language. We can learn the different body signals that indicate how a cat is feeling. Some of these signals can be very subtle, so watch your kitty closely.



## The 'Traffic Light' System

The following section describes cat's body language for various emotional states. We talk about the 'Green Zone', the 'Orange Zone' and 'Red Zone'. It is really important to get to know these signs, especially the subtle 'Orange Zone' behaviours, as these will give you warning that your kitten or cat is not comfortable.

### The Green Zone: Relaxed and happy

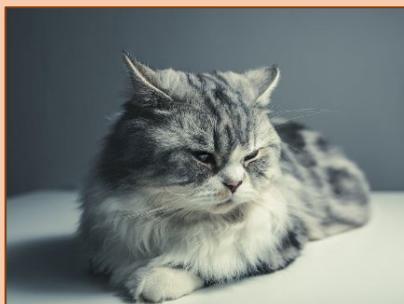
Soft eye expression	Ears Forward
Relaxed, loose body movements	Rubbing side of head
Rolling over to show belly (Do NOT pat!)	Gentle head-butt (bunting)
Grooming behaviour	Kneading with paws
Slow eye blink	Tail upright when walking, with a question-mark curve at the tip
Purring (although this can also occur when a cat is stressed)	



One ‘Green Zone’ behaviour of note is stretching out and rolling over to show the belly. This is a sign of trust, as it’s a vulnerable position for a cat to be in. For most cats, being touched on the belly is a breach of this trust. Appreciate the compliment, but keep your hands away.

### **The Orange Zone: Feeling unsure, uncomfortable, anxious or conflicted**

<b>Body</b>	<b>Face</b>	<b>Tail</b>
Moving very slowly	Ears moving to sides	Tail swishing
Body hunched	Ears flattening	Tail puffed out
Shying or leaning away	Large pupils	
Not wanting to eat	Eyes narrowing	
Skin twitching when touched	Eyes wide and staring	
Leaving the room	Licking lips	
Hiding	Looking away	



You *will* see your cat displaying ‘Orange Zone’ behaviours. They are common, and normal. It can be normal if your cat is showing you these signs when interacting with you, or at the vets, or when interacting with other cats. The most important thing is to take notice and to change the situation to give the kitten more time or more space to become comfortable. Allow your cat to remove himself from the situation, or back off a little and give him some time to explore and some room to move. For example, if your cat’s tail starts swishing when a person comes up to pat him, ask that person to stop their approach and ignore him until he is more comfortable. Give the cat some time and space and allow him to approach if and when he wants to.

Situations that are likely to make your cat uncomfortable include: being restrained, being held ‘like a baby’, being disturbed while sleeping or eating, being patted or stroked excessively.

This is not to say that you can't do those things, but if you do, you'll need to teach your cat to be comfortable in these situations first.

Whatever you do, do not punish 'Orange Zone' behaviours. If you punish a cat for hissing (for example), he may be less likely to hiss next time. However, it doesn't change his emotional state – in fact, it makes things worse, as now the cat is worried about whatever made him hiss *and* the fact that you might squirt him with a water gun.

**The Red Zone:** The cat is highly aroused and may be frightened. He can no longer think calmly, or listen to cues. 'Survival mode' is activated. The cat may adopt one of four strategies: Fight (repulsion), flight (avoidance), freeze (inhibition), or fiddle (appeasement).

Hissing or growling

Hunched body

Freezing

Biting

'Halloween cat' posture

Pupils dilated

Scratching

Hiding

Running away

Body low to the ground



If your cat does go over the threshold into the red zone, then make sure he is in a safe location, and then leave him alone. Don't try to coax him out, move him, or pat him. It can take up to 48 hours for a cat to calm down, so make sure you pop in occasionally to make sure he has food, water and clean litter available. When he is ready to come out, he will. If this happens to your cat regularly, please consult with your friendly veterinary staff.

## Kitten Play

Kitten play behaviour includes pretend hunting, chasing and fighting. Kittens will use play invitations like bounces and pounces to indicate that they want to engage in play. Normal play involves short bouts of stalking, chasing or wrestling with rest periods in between. Kittens may lie down, or take a break by having a quick groom, sometimes side-by-side. Biting can be a normal part of play. If you think your kitten is getting a bit too rough or aroused, pause the play and get her to take a short break to calm down. Make sure you never use your hands/feet to

play with a kitten – it’s not so cute when they are fully grown and don’t know how to play appropriately.



Watch the behaviour of any demo kittens in class and feel free to ask your kitten class instructor to interpret body language for you!

Watch the YouTube video “Body Language in Cats” by UK Cats Protection for more hints on interpreting your kitten’s behaviour.



## 7 things you need to know about kittens



1. Cats are predators. They use ambush techniques to kill their prey. Predatory behaviour is hardwired, so you need to give your kitten plenty of play pouncing opportunities to fulfil her requirements – or she'll be likely to use her humans as targets.
2. Cats are very small and are solitary hunters. Their wild ancestors were often prey for bigger predators. So, much of the time, cats display prey-type behaviours. They err on the side of caution and often run, freeze, or hide if scared. This is the reason that your cat will take her time assessing whether it is safe to go through the door you are holding open for her. It's also the reason she's likely to change her mind and want to come back in straight away!
3. Cats live in a three-dimensional world. Humans place all their furniture on the ground, and fill high spaces with clutter. This really doesn't work for the cat, who uses high places to explore, and to feel safe while surveying the scene (see point 2). So, you'll need some perches and shelves above human shoulder height that your cat can use to rest on.
4. Cats are obligate carnivores. This means that they will die if they are fed a vegetarian or vegan diet. If this is a choice you have made for yourself, please understand that your cat absolutely must eat meat (including a well-balanced cat food).
5. Cats may live in loose social groups, however they are not a 'socially obligate' species like dogs or humans. If they have a fight with another cat, it can be exceedingly difficult to convince them that it is worthwhile making up.
6. Cats eat alone. They get stressed if they have to share food bowls, or eat near other cats (or dogs, or humans). Please respect your cats and give each a private dining location.
7. You can (and should!) train your cat. Cats can be taught to come when called, sit, jump onto or off furniture (or through hoops). As with any species, you should use positive reinforcement techniques (rewarding the good things), and avoid punishment. That means no water pistols, yelling, or chasing with brooms. You can also teach your cat to have her nails trimmed, fur brushed, teeth checked, and (importantly) to happily take medication.

