



# KEEPING KITTENS OUT OF THE SHELTER

Every year shelters across the country are overwhelmed with the amount of kittens pouring in. By keeping them out of the shelter, you truly are a lifesaver.

Even just keeping kittens until they are about 2 months old and weigh 2 lbs is a **huge** help to us. You're giving them much-needed socialization **and** freeing up a kennel or foster home until the kittens can be spayed/neutered and adopted.

If you can rehome the kittens on your own and avoid the shelter altogether, that is the best option!

## WHAT KITTENS NEED

- **A safe place for them to stay** - Give the kittens a warm, dry place to live indoors (a spare bathroom or even a dog crate equipped with a small litter tray works well; kittens can't escape but can see out).
- **Age-appropriate food** - see below for feeding suggestions.
- **Litterbox and litter** - going in the litterbox is a natural instinct for most kittens, so most won't need training!
- **Play and love** - this will make their transition to living with people much easier.

The Pet Resource Center at Austin Animal Center has a limited supply of donated items so stop in and see if we have things like litterboxes, food, bowls, toys, etc!

## FEEDING

### 0-3 weeks

These kittens require bottle feeding with Kitten Milk Replacer if they've been orphaned. Check out the Kitten Lady ([kittenlady.org](http://kittenlady.org)) for videos and information on how to bottle feed.

### 3-6 weeks

We affectionately call these kittens "gruel babies" because they eat a mixture of wet food and Kitten Milk Replacer (and usually end up with it all over their faces). It's best to also have a bowl of dry food available so they start to eat that as well.

### 6-8 weeks

Kittens should be graduated to dry kitten food at this age, although you can supplement with wet food.

## REHOMING

Use Nextdoor, Facebook, and ask friends and family to help network the cat. You can also post on the website [rehome.adoptapet.com](http://rehome.adoptapet.com).

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Low cost spay/neuter

- FREE (must weigh at least 3 lbs): Emancipet Mobile Clinic - [emancipet.org/mobile/](http://emancipet.org/mobile/)
- Texas Humane Heroes (must weight at least 2 lbs) - [humaneheroes.org/clinic\\_services/](http://humaneheroes.org/clinic_services/)

### Low cost vaccinations

- Emancipet - [emancipet.org/](http://emancipet.org/)
- Texas Humane Heroes - [humaneheroes.org/clinic\\_services/](http://humaneheroes.org/clinic_services/)

### Medical vouchers

- [communitycats@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitycats@austintexas.gov)

### Free microchip

- Austin Animal Center

