

Checklist for Socialization

by Dr. Sophia Yin



The goal is that the kitten has positive experiences, not neutral or bad ones. It's important to watch the kitten's response and note what it is and to also give treats to help ensure the exposure is a success. Here's a checklist that can help you. Download a copy of this kitten socialization checklist at www.drSophiaYin.com.

You can grade the response if you want or just check off each exposure.

PROGRESS	SCORE	RESPONSE TO THE PERSON, OBJECT, ENVIRONMENT OR HANDLING
Needs Work	5	Reactive/Aggressive: Growl, hiss, scratch, bite, yowl
	4	Avoid: Struggle, hide, try to get away, won't approach, or hesitant to approach
	3	Freeze: Holds still (but not eating), non-exploratory, moving slowly or acting sleepy when they shouldn't be tired, crouch close to floor
Going well	2	Calm, relaxed, explores the object or environment, playful, focused on the food or toy
	1	Calm, relaxed, explores the object or environment, playful, even without food or toy

Additionally a + can be used to denote better progress and a – denotes not as well (e.g. 2+, 2, 2-) such that for each score there are three levels of responses.

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Week Start Date _____

CLASS OF SOCIALIZATION	SPECIFIC SOCIALIZATION	DAY & SCORE (or check mark)						
		M	T	W	Th	F	S	Sun
<p>Handling</p> 	Checking the ears							
	Examining mouth and gums							
	Opening the eyelids							
	Squeezing the feet							
	Handling and trimming the toenails							
	Pinching skin							
	Poking the skin with a capped pen							
	Poking the nose with a capped pen							
	Cradling kitten in your arms on its back							
	Holding him in your lap							
	Holding kitten upside down							
	Holding kitten on its back while giving a belly rub							
	Hugging your kitten							
	Pulling the collar (gotcha)							
	Grabbing kitten by other part of body							
	Wiping body with a towel							
	Putting on a harness							

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		M	T	W	Th	F	S	Sun
Unfamiliar People 	Women							
	Men							
	People of many ethnicities							
	Children standing as well as playing							
	Toddlers (walking and squealing)							
	Infants (crawling)							
	People running by							
Unfamiliar Cats 	Friendly adult cats							
	Friendly kittens who play well							
Other animal species 	Dogs							
	Any types of pets you may have							

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CLASS OF SOCIALIZATION	SPECIFIC SOCIALIZATION	M	T	W	Th	F	S	Sun
Vet Hospital Prep 	Crate							
	Car Rides							
	Metal surfaces-such as vet hospital scales, exam tables							
	Vet Clinic							
Scary sounds  If you do not have the ability to expose the kitten to these sounds frequently enough or at a level where she can have a positive experience, use sound CDs. Some sounds may be more realistic when surround sound.	Thunder							
	Fireworks							
	Babies and kids							
	Alarms							
	Dogs barking							
	Doorbell ringing							
	Traffic (like downtown in a city)							
	Jack hammers							
	Vacuum cleaner							
	Sirens							
New Environments 	Suburban neighborhood							
	Residential city streets							
	Commercial buildings							