

# 6 Things to Know If You Find an Abandoned Kitten

So, you found an abandoned kitten — do you know what to do next? This list of six steps will help you figure out exactly what orphaned kittens need.

## 1. Make sure the kitten is actually abandoned.

Her mother might be off hunting or, if she's feral, hiding from you. Keep an eye on the kitten from a safe distance. If the mother hasn't come back after 12 hours, it's time to take the next step.

## 2. Keep the abandoned kitten warm.

Kittens younger than 3 weeks can't control their body temperature and can get chilled easily. Prepare a "nest" lined with towels, with a heating pad or hot water bottle underneath. Leave extra space she can crawl away to if she gets too hot.

## 3. See other sources for help.

Check with your local shelter or rescue group to see if they might already have some nursing mother cats. Or, they might have volunteers or foster caretakers who know how to bottle-feed kittens. They can also provide advice if you decide to take on the kitten's care yourself.

## 4. Bottle-feed the abandoned kitten if necessary.

If the kitten is a week old or younger, you'll need to [bottle-feed](#) her kitten formula every two hours around the clock. At 2 weeks of age, she can be fed every four hours around the clock.

Make sure she is belly-down when bottle-feeding to ensure the formula goes into her stomach and not her lungs. Once she's 4 to 5 weeks old [she can start on wet kitten food](#).

## **5. Care after feeding is important.**

After every feeding, the kitten will need to be gently burped and wiped. If she's less than 4 weeks, her anogenital area needs to be wiped with a warm, damp paper towel or cloth to stimulate her to urinate and defecate.

## **6. Know that an abandoned kitten is very vulnerable.**

Not every kitten rescue has a happy ending. Since orphaned kittens don't get the benefits of the antibodies in the mother's milk, they're more vulnerable to problems like infections, hypothermia and anemia.

Don't be hard on yourself if the kitten doesn't make it. Realize that you did your best and take comfort in the fact that the kitten knew safety and love while in your care.

**Tell us:** Have you ever found an abandoned kitten?