

~Caring for Your Newly Adopted Cat~

Congratulations! You've adopted your new working cat from Orange County Animal Services. This cat prefers to live more independently than the traditional house cat. So, here are some tips to help get your new working cat set up for a life in your barn, stable, or other structure that needs a hard-working feline!

Initial Confinement Period

When you bring your community cat home, we recommend keeping the cat confined in an enclosed area or large wire crate for about 2 weeks if possible. Please feed the cat some extra yummy food (stinky wet cat food often works well) during this period. Try to keep the environment as calm as possible for the cat: no loud noises or other rambunctious outdoor animals.

After this short period of secure confinement, the cat will hopefully accept your barn, stable, or other shelter as their new home. We recommend that you continue to offer the canned wet food for a few weeks after the confinement period. Then, you can switch to regular dry cat food if you prefer.

We understand that this confinement period is hard work for you and your new feline. If you need to shorten the confinement this is understandable, the 2 weeks is recommended for optimal results. And, some cats may not hang around even after you've completed the confinement stage. However, this is the best method for encouraging your new working cat to call your place home. Sometimes, cats may disappear once they are released from confinement and return in a few days. The prospect of good food often encourages them to return. Other times, cats may not return. It is important for you to know that, if you followed these guidelines and the cats do not return, it is not your fault. If that happens, we can discuss trying this again with some different cats.

Shelter

Your cat should have secure shelter and sufficient protection from weather and predators. Straw makes good bedding for these working cats because it repels moisture and helps keep them warm in the winter.

Nutrition

Cats should not be left to survive on their own outside. They will need supplemental nutrition provided for them. Feeding your working cat good quality cat food will enable him/her to remain healthy and happy. Also, make sure to have a few fresh water sources consistently available to your cat and keep the water from freezing in winter.

Vaccinations

Your cat will come to you fully vaccinated. Please consult a veterinarian for any needed future vaccines. By law, all cats need to remain up-to-date on their rabies vaccines. Luckily, a three-year rabies vaccine may be available for your cat and there are mobile veterinarians that may come to your location.

Other Considerations

Your outdoor cat may serve as predator or prey. Please consider your neighbors and your neighborhood's wildlife if you decide to adopt one of our working cats. Bird feeders should be placed so that it is difficult for a cat to hide in bushes or other nearby areas where they can jump out and surprise the birds. Cats may also fall prey to larger predators like coyotes. We recommend that you follow any available guidelines to discourage predators from visiting your property. Make sure your cats have places where they can climb and hide if needed.