

Kitten Tutor™: Appliances for your Kitten Nursery



Kitten Tutor™

Washers/Dryers: Key pieces of equipment nurseries use constantly are washers and dryers. If possible, at least one industrial washer and dryer will be needed. Some nurseries we interviewed (handling 1,000-2,000 kittens) wished they had two of each. But if the budget -- or space -- does not permit these huge machines, you can get by with household washers and dryers. Staff and volunteers using non-commercial washers and dryers need to know they are not built to meet the demands of constant use as needed in the nursery, so the machines will need to be treated with a little more care. Also, it is difficult or impossible for the machines to effectively clean oversized loads or extremely soiled laundry. Items must be able to move freely and agitate properly to become clean. Sometimes two washings of the same load may be required. In addition, you will likely need to replace residential washers and dryers more often than commercial ones (e.g., every two years depending on the shape they were in if they were donated).

Dishwasher: Some nurseries use dishwashers; others do not. One nursery profiled cited the need to supplement the washing with a sanitizer. If you have the space and the resources, a dishwasher can certainly be useful. Be sure to have cleaning protocols in place so each person uses it properly.

Refrigerator: You will need at least one refrigerator with a freezer. Items that will need to be refrigerated include mixed formula, open cans of powdered formula (in most cases), open cans of wet kitten food, and some medications. A freezer is useful for ice packs, long-term storage of formula bought in bulk and for making Pedialyte ice cubes. Large household refrigerators (frequently donated) will also work well. Small refrigerators will do if space is an issue. If space and resources permit, you will want to have a refrigerator in each kitten room and separate refrigerators for food and medications. Note: Personal food for staff and volunteers must not be kept in animal supply refrigerators.

Microwave: Useful to heat Snugglesafe pet heat pads or rice sacks to help regulate the temperature of kittens. Most shelters and rescues can get a microwave donated—just ask on social media, and make sure to thank the donor by showing it in use!

Note: While rice sacks are budget-friendly, most are not cleanable/disinfect-able.

The National Kitten Coalition offers Kitten Tutor™ handouts free to anyone interested in saving kittens. We are a 501(c)(3) and teach shelters, rescues, foster families and the veterinary community how to save more kittens. To learn more, visit: www.kittencoalition.org. © 2021 The National Kitten Coalition