

Kitten Tutor™: Preparing for Kitten Season - Cleaning and Disinfecting



Kitten season is fast approaching. Whether you are a shelter or veterinary professional or a foster family, The National Kitten Coalition wants to make sure you are ready for the 'can you help' text/call/email!

Here's what you need to prepare your space and ensure you have supplies for foster kittens.

First, we wanted to give you some questions to consider. Which space is the best space for fostering kittens? What are the best items to choose for fostering? Once those questions have been answered, it's time to clean, then disinfect!

- Start by washing with soap or detergent. Then, disinfect to kill those nasty viruses that can survive even the toughest scrubbing with regular cleaning products. You'll want to have on hand a shelter- or hospital-grade disinfectant and carefully follow product directions for contact time and rinsing if needed.
- Wash and disinfect all the towels, sheets and blankets you use in your kitten care area. Organize them by type and size, place them in clear plastic bags (so you know later that they have been cleaned and disinfected) and store in an area away from animals and possible contaminants.
- Collect all the utensils, dishes, bottles, and other food-related items and wash them thoroughly using your favorite dish-cleaning product. Then, disinfect via boiling or autoclaving if the item can withstand the process. If using a disinfecting product, be sure it is safe for food items and be sure to rinse very well as required.
- Scrub or discard litter boxes and scoops. Remember, you should never use the same scoop between cages or rooms. Same thing goes for brooms, mops, sponges, brushes, etc.
- Wash the cages, carriers, bins, and other "containers" you use to house your kittens. If possible, completely submerge them in disinfecting solution rather than merely wiping or spraying it on the items. This helps ensure that nothing can "hide" in the corners, nooks and crannies. Don't forget to rinse as needed. Then store appropriately away from animals or in more clear plastic bags.
- Is your room empty now of all the items above? Removing as much as possible from the room is a bit of work, but it will make washing the windows, light fixtures, ventilation grates, non-porous walls, door knobs, light switches and anything else "attached" to the room a bit easier. Then, give the floors another once-over to get all that might have floated down and landed there.
- Take a supply inventory, check expiration dates, and reorder needed items to be ready for the next litter of kittens. They'll be here sooner than we think!

Proper cleaning and sanitation practices are essential for keeping kittens healthy and saving lives. Diseases lurk everywhere and spread quickly, so continue to make sanitation a priority, and a Special Project for down time, whenever you have it. And, remember, kittens get into everything! Keep them safe by removing them from the area when cleaning and by using and storing cleaning supplies properly.

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