

Creating a Litterbox For Your New Cat
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If you are thinking of acquiring a new kitten, or even an adult cat, consider the following as you set up a litterbox for your new friend.

1. Studies show that most cats prefer fine-grained materials that feel soft underfoot, so start out with one of the small grained clumping litters.
2. Cats need some degree of privacy for elimination, so the litterbox should not be located in a high traffic area. However, neither should it be put in an isolated corner of the basement where the cat is unlikely to want to go. Choose an out-of-the way corner perhaps in a quiet room.
3. Cats like to be able to see around them, so they can't be "ambushed" while eliminating. Especially if there are other animals in the house or children, make sure the cat can see who's approaching rather than being surrounded by a covered box or confined in a closet.
4. Be sure to keep the litterbox very clean. Clumps and feces should be scooped daily and the litter should be changed often enough so there is no odor and the litter appears dry and clean.
5. It's not true that if a little is good, more is better. Keep the litter relatively shallow, about an inch and a half deep. It seems most cats don't like to feel that they are sinking into a bottomless pit.
6. Provide at least as many litterboxes as there are cats in the family, and put them in different locations. Boxes lined up next to one another only provide one available box, as cats may not like to eliminate right next to one another at the same time.
7. Don't expect kittens, geriatric cats or ill animals to be able to get to a box that is far away from where they spend most of their time. Make sure boxes for these cats are easily accessed. A box with lower sides may also be helpful, such as a plastic lid from an under-the bed storage box.
8. If for any reason a new cat does not use the box regularly, have her examined by a veterinarian immediately. If she is healthy, have your veterinarian refer you to a cat behavior specialist.