

# Ten Reasons to Adopt an Adult Cat

by Kevin Davis (February 2002)

You've probably given some thought to what kind of kitten you want: Tuxedo or Calico, male or female, large breed or small. But have you considered adopting an adult cat? You may find that there are many more adult cats waiting for homes than kittens. Take a minute to think about it. You may be glad you did. Here are ten reasons why you should adopt an adult cat, instead of a kitten.

1. What you see is what you get. When you adopt an adult cat, you know what you are getting. Sure, kittens are cute, but you never know what the future holds. An adorable kitten could grow up to be a really ugly puss. This is a big risk. Go for the sure thing. Take a sweet-faced old Tabby.
2. High mileage cats still run great. Used cats aren't like used cars. They aren't at a shelter because they are defective or worn out. They may have simply outlived their former owners or been unable to join them at a hospital, nursing home, or new apartment. Some cats get lost and end up at a shelter. And many are brought to a shelter after a family member develops allergies, or an aversion to the family cat. (In those cases, it is the previous owner that is defective, not the cat.)
3. Adult cats aren't as "chewsy". Kittens are like human children: everything goes in their mouths. Whether teething or just exploring bits of the world around them, kittens can be very destructive little bundles of fur. Kittens chew on shoes, the corners of books, ear lobes, carpet tassels, electrical cords, drapery strings, plants, and much, much more. Adult cats typically chew less, if at all. They tend to save their energy for more important activities, like tormenting the neighbor's Terrier.
4. Kittens stumble in blindly, where adult cats fear to tread. Two well-known clichés about cats are: "curiosity killed the cat" and "cats have nine lives." And curiosity usually leads to the loss of about eight of a kitten's lives in its first year. Kittens tend to get into much more trouble resulting in accidents and injuries (see, for example, the reference to "chewing electrical cords" above). Kittens eat things they shouldn't, fall from high places, unsuccessfully attempt to make friends with the neighbor's tormented Terrier, and generally worry you half to death.
5. Kittens are lacking when it comes to licking. Few kittens have mastered the fine art of self-grooming. While adult cats may spend up to half their waking hours licking fur, kittens are just too busy enjoying life to clean themselves properly. When you consider that kittens are really just dust-mops with legs, and that they generally display marginal litter box etiquette, you might want to master the somewhat dangerous art of cat-bathing.
6. Einstein knew the truth about cats. The genius scientist Albert Einstein discovered an important relationship between mass and energy. He described it using the mathematical equation  $E=MC^2$ . This equation means that your Energy level (E) is proportional to the Mass (M) of your Cat<sup>o</sup>, twice over. The equation basically shows that if you adopt a cat with more Mass, like an adult cat, your Energy level will be much higher than if you adopt a cat with a low Mass, such as a kitten. This is true because adult cats sleep more, play less, require less supervision, break fewer lamps, and don't try to bite your toes through the blankets in the middle of the night. With an adult cat, you will sleep better, relax more, make fewer claims on your homeowner's policy, and enjoy more Energy. There you have it. Are you going to argue with Albert Einstein?
7. Kittens and children don't mix. Children can be rough on both cats and kittens, even when they mean no real harm. It can't be helped. It's just how kids are. When you tell a child that "cats always land on their feet," the first thing the child will do is drop one from your rooftop to see if it's true. Adult cats are better equipped to deal with pesky kids. They can generally escape from them, hide, and then contemplate revenge by moonlight.
8. You don't need to teach an old cat new tricks. Actually, you don't need to teach a kitten tricks either, because the truth is that neither cats nor kittens allow you to teach them anything anyway. But new parents usually feel the need to try. Inevitably, they end up feeling guilt or failure when the kitten disregards them, jumps on the counters, unrolls the toilet paper, and engages in other acts of feline mayhem. If you adopt an older cat, you avoid all this emotional turmoil. Since you didn't raise the cat, you don't have to take responsibility for the cat's shortcomings. Instead, you can blame the former owner and play the role of victim and saint for tolerating it all.
9. Adult cats don't "litter" as much. Kittens play, sunbathe, build sandcastles, and even sleep in their litter boxes. And then there's a game called "poo-hockey," where a piece of dried waste is removed from the box and batted around the floor until it disappears under a major appliance or piece of furniture. People who adopt older cats happily miss this stage of feline development. Adult cats understand the purpose of a litter box and will usually cooperate with your efforts to keep theirs tidy. But the most important reason to adopt an older cat is:
10. It might be their last chance. Many adult cats end up in shelters due to no fault of their own. Separated from their loved ones, surrounded by other strange cats, confined, confused, and sometimes frightened, many are emotionally devastated by their misfortune. Sadly for adult cats, most people who adopt gravitate toward the adorable, bouncy, big-eyed kittens. Older cats sit by and watch, as one loving family after another passes them over for a cute kitten from this season's litter.

Kittens will always be popular, and most have no trouble attracting admirers. But for the abandoned, forgotten, and heartbroken adult cats, you just might be their last chance to have the love and warmth of a home where they can live out their years in comfort. Please consider adopting an older cat. When cared for properly, cats can live well into their late teens, and sometimes into their early twenties. Typically, they will remain active and playful throughout most of their lives. Some may need a little extra patience while adjusting to a new home, but once they feel safe and secure again, most will give you years of faithful companionship and unconditional love.

## Maine Coon Adoptions