



## Found Cats and Kittens

# What should I do if I find a kitten/s younger than 8 weeks, with or without a mother in a private/quiet location?

Only attempt to rescue kittens and cats if it is safe for you to do so, with minimal risk of being bitten or scratched.

If you are bitten or badly scratched by a cat/kitten always seek medical care immediately as these injuries can cause severe infection and illness in people.

It is essential to phone a vet or Ten Lives immediately for advice on how to care for orphaned kittens. Observe the situation before touching or moving kittens.

The best outcome for kittens is to keep them with their mother.

### Kittens in immediate danger:

- Move (if safe to) to an area close by, sheltered from sun, rain, wind, and away from people, traffic, or dogs off leads.
- Take note of the kittens' body condition
  - Clean, plump, and content - mother is most likely close by.
  - Dirty, cold, and crying - may have been abandoned.
- Kittens content - quietly observe from a distance for several hours to see if their mother returns, she maybe hunting, hiding, or in the process of moving the kittens to a safer location.
- Take to vet immediately if very weak, cold, lethargic, and gums white or blue. Place in box/carrier with warm bedding and covered hot water bottle/heat pack for transportation.
- Kittens cannot generate their own heat, so it is important a source of heat is provided.
- Kittens under 3-4 weeks of age are unable to urinate or defecate by themselves, if assistance is not provided it can be life threatening.

### Mother is present or returns:

- Leave kitten with mother to care for them.
- Provide cat food (preferably chicken variety) or tuna in spring water and a water bowl, not milk.
- Do not leave food in tins when feeding due to the risk of injury to their mouth, tongue, or face.
- If the mother is friendly and easy to handle, contact Ten Lives on 6278 2111 to book an appointment to bring her and her kittens into the shelter. Visit: [tenlives.com.au/factsheets/found-cats-and-kittens](https://tenlives.com.au/factsheets/found-cats-and-kittens) for more information on the procedures for bringing a cat and kittens in to Ten Lives.
- If the mother is timid or aggressive, contact Ten Lives for advice on how to catch the mother cat with kittens and to book an appointment to bring them to the shelter. Visit: [tenlives.com.au/factsheets/found-cats-and-kittens](https://tenlives.com.au/factsheets/found-cats-and-kittens) for more information on the procedures for bringing a cat and kittens in to Ten Lives.

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### Mother has not returned:

- Place in a box/carrier with warm bedding and covered hot water bottle/heat pack. Kittens cannot generate their own body heat so it is important a source of heat is provided.
- It is essential to phone a vet or Ten Lives immediately for advice on how to care for orphaned kittens, or to book an appointment as the kittens will require urgent attention.
- Young kittens, without a mother to care for them, are at high risk of not surviving without receiving immediate specialized care.

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### NOTE:

*Do not feed strays ongoing.*

*Do not give kittens cow's milk or supermarket cat milk, it can cause diarrhea. Kittens who are not eating wet food with ease will require a specialized kitten formula called Wombaroo Cat Milk Replacer, available from Ten Lives and some vet clinics and pet stores.*

*If kitten/s are 4 weeks of age or older, provide canned kitten food, preferably chicken variety and a bowl of water.*

*The younger kittens are when socialised with people, the better chance they have at becoming great pets. This becomes increasingly more difficult from 8 weeks of age.*

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**Below is a visual estimation to help you determine the rough age of a found kitten/s so as to determine the best course of action for how you will proceed with the situation.**



## Transporting Cats & Kittens

- When taking a cat to a vet or Ten Lives ensure it is contained securely in a carrier. If a carrier is not available a large container/box which has ventilation holes (or ventilation holes added) and a lid which can be secured will suffice.
- Temporarily placing a lightweight blanket or towel over the cat/kitten will assist with handling.
- Covering the carrier/box with a light weight blanket or towel will assist in calming the cat/kitten.
- Do not attempt to carry any cat/kitten in your arms, it must be securely contained.
- If you arrive at Ten Lives, and the cat/kitten is not contained, leave it in the car and ask reception for a carrier.
- Containing a cat/kitten when transporting it will make the cat feel safe and prevent it escaping and becoming lost.