

Kitten's First Year Milestone Tracker

A kitten's first year moves fast, and much of it runs on a schedule most owners don't expect — deworming that starts before vaccines do, a socialization window that closes earlier than it seems like it should, and a spay/neuter decision with no single right age. Fill this in as you go and bring it to vet visits — a specific date is far more useful than trying to recall the timeline from memory months later.

About this tracker

The schedule below is modeled on the AAHA/AAFP Feline Vaccination Guidelines and standard veterinary deworming protocols, cross-referenced with Frolicy's Kitten Care Basics guide. It's a memory aid for a normal, healthy kitten — not a substitute for your vet's specific recommendations, which should always take priority if they differ from what's here.

Getting started

- Kitten's name: _____ Breed/coloring: _____
- Arrival date: _____ Estimated age at arrival: _____
- Vet clinic + phone: _____

Weeks 2-9 — Deworming rounds

Starts before the vaccine series, on its own more frequent schedule — intestinal parasites are near-universal in kittens, passed from the mother before birth or through nursing.

- ☐ Round 1 (weeks 2-3) — date: _____
- ☐ Round 2 (weeks 4-5) — date: _____
- ☐ Round 3 (weeks 6-7) — date: _____
- ☐ Round 4 (weeks 8-9) — date: _____

Weeks 6-16 — Core vaccine series

- ☐ First vaccine round (weeks 6-8) — date: _____
- ☐ Second vaccine round (weeks 10-12) — date: _____
- ☐ Final vaccine round + rabies (weeks 14-16) — date: _____

Weeks 8-16 — Socialization window closing

The most sensitive period (roughly weeks 2-7) has usually already passed by typical adoption age — a real secondary window extends to about week 14-16. Gentle daily handling and calm new experiences during this time still meaningfully shape adult temperament.

☐ Daily gentle handling (paws, ears, mouth) — through week: _____

Months 2-6 — Deworming continues monthly

☐ Month 3 — date: _____

☐ Month 4 — date: _____

☐ Month 5 — date: _____

☐ Month 6 — date: _____

Months 3-4 — Teething begins

Baby teeth start falling out to make way for adult teeth. Mild drooling, chewing, and some irritability are normal. By month 6-7, all adult teeth should be in — a baby tooth that hasn't fallen out by then (a 'retained deciduous tooth') is worth a vet check.

☐ Month 6-7 vet check — no retained baby teeth confirmed: _____

Months 3-6 — Spay/neuter conversation

There's no single right age — traditional timing is 5-6 months, but pediatric spay/neuter as early as 6-8 weeks is increasingly common and AVMA-endorsed. What the evidence does show clearly: for female kittens, timing before the first heat (possible as early as 4 months) meaningfully reduces mammary cancer risk. Discuss timing with your vet based on your kitten's specific health and lifestyle.

☐ Discussed timing with vet: _____

☐ Scheduled/completed — date: _____

Months 4-6 — Growth and adolescence

Growth is fastest around month 4-5. By month 6, most kittens move into a more independent, 'adolescent' phase — genuinely a developmental shift, not a personality problem.

☐ Weight check near fastest growth point — date/weight: _____

Months 9-12 — Adult food transition

☐ Gradual 7-10 day transition to adult food started — date: _____

☐ Transition completed — date: _____

Months 12-18 — The growing-up transition

Less on-demand cuddling and more independent exploration is a real developmental transition,

not your cat loving you less — research on cat-human attachment shows secure bonds don't require constant physical closeness. A gradual shift is expected; a sudden, sharp personality change at any age is not, and is worth a vet visit rather than assuming it's 'just the phase.'

Not a diagnosis, and not the same as a formal vet exam — it's a memory aid for the conversations you'll have along the way. Full guidance on development, socialization, litter training, feeding, and the decision points above: Frolicy's Kitten Care Center.