



## Wisecracks Devon Rex Kitten Care Sheet

Please read through this guide to keeping your Devon Rex happy and healthy

Your kitten has been handled since birth, raised in a busy family home with cats, dogs, parrots and a multitude of other animals. Although he/she will adjust easily to his/her new surroundings, he/she will still require a gradual introduction to your home and other animals.

**PLEASE KEEP HIM/HER CONFINED INDOORS FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS AND FROM DUSK TO DAWN THROUGHOUT HIS/HER LIFE**

Please consider keeping an indoor only cat

### TOILET BOX

Do not use clumping litters, these have been known to kill kittens if they eat the litter, which they often do being inquisitive. Please have your kittens litter box ready where you intend to keep it, and pop him/her in it as soon as he/she gets home, and after every meal for the first few days. Remember to praise him/her when you see him/her using the litter box.

It is best to confine him/her when unsupervised to a small area of the house; it can be a long journey to the toilet for a very little cat. If he/she makes a mistake, say no firmly and put him/her directly into his/her litter box, and clean up thoroughly where he/she made the mistake, to deter him/her from returning to the scene of the crime.

Personally I cannot recommend Odarid Pet Stain and Odour Remover more highly! It is available from Craig directly at [www.odarid.co.nz](http://www.odarid.co.nz) and in my experience, which is not to be sniffed at (pardon the pun) this product is by far the best for removing all traces of the smell not only for humans but also the more sensitive nose of the cat.

### DIET

Your kitten has been raised on a variety of foods; Whiskas Advance kitten biscuits, raw chicken necks and ox cheek, tongue and heart mince. He/she will require three meals a day up to the age of six months; they may then be fed twice a day up to the age of nine months. Please make sure you feed a calcium supplement up to the age of nine months if you are choosing to feed a raw food diet, dried kitten food has added calcium and provides a complete balanced diet. There is a lot of information available about feline diets I personally prefer to feed a variety of foods and to include raw meat and chicken necks in my cat's diet. Once your kitten reaches nine months of age they are considered an adult and should be fed an adult diet. I strongly recommend feeding a dental diet once your kitten becomes an adult at 9 months. Tooth decay and gum disease are conditions many cats will develop as they age and these conditions can have an impact on their general health and may lead to kidney disease in later life.☐☐

If your kitten prefers one type of food, try not to give into him/her, a varied diet is better for his/her health and your budget. Always have fresh water available; especially if you choose to feed any quantity of dried food.

Raw chicken necks are excellent for keeping tartar build up down on teeth. If you choose to use dried food, only feed good quality biscuits, not the cheap supermarket brands.

Egg Yolks may be served raw, however the whites must be cooked. Include Fat in your cat's diet, a little butter or lard. The Rex breeds especially require this.

Raw Liver is important in the diet but should not be fed more than twice a week, as it may cause diarrhoea, and in large quantities it may also cause vitamin A poisoning. Beware of "pet mince" too often it contains large quantities of liver.

Dog Foods are not suitable for cats as they have very different nutritional requirements from dogs. Cats require more vitamins A and B, taurine, fatty acids, and animal protein than dogs. Cats are still obligatory carnivores whereas dogs are scavengers, dual cat/dog foods are actually cat foods suitable to dogs, and are perfectly adequate. If your kitten prefers one type of food, try not to give into him/her, a varied diet is better for her health and your budget.

Please try not to allow your Devon Rex to get fat. They love food and will try desperately to convince you that they are starving to death. Easier said than done!

If your dog does not like to share its meal please lock your kitten away while your dog eats, as they will show no fear where food is concerned.

## GROOMING

**Fleas** Your kitten has been treated with Advantage prior to leaving our home. It is your choice what product, if any, you choose to use for fleas. Spoton is an organophosphate and can have quite severe side effects and is best avoided for cats.

**Claws** Devon Rex and Devon Rex Variants grow longer nails more quickly than most other cat breeds. Your kitten's claws have been kept clipped, standard human nail clippers are ideal. Because all cat claws are clear it is straight forward identifying the quick and cutting to avoid this. Wait until she is settled on your lap, speak to her reassuringly, and she should cooperate. Just put your fingers under her pads and gently press down on her paw with your thumb to expose the nail. Alternatively you can use a clothes peg on the scruff of the neck as this makes most cats and kittens flop as if their mother is carrying them and makes any care much easier to administer! A scratching post is essential, do not be seduced by looks, you need a solid base and a long enough pole for the cat to stretch to full length standing on hind legs with front legs reaching up. If your kitten uses the furniture to strop a sharp clap and stern no should discourage her (while you are looking) alternatively I use a garden spray bottle of water to spray offending individual and that way they don't know where it came from, but stop their destructive behaviour temporarily at least.

## EYES

If your kitten develops any eye discharge gently swab it from the nose side outwards; never use the same swab more than once. Bathing in the other direction can spread any infection to the other eye. I find makeup pads wonderful to have on hand for any minor first aid requirements, they are absorbent and the cotton wool is covered in gauze to stop bits of fluff getting into the eye or wound. If the discharge continues for more than two days contact your veterinarian. Do not use drops or ointments without advice as they may destroy the natural antibodies on the eye surface and can therefore make the condition worse by allowing harmful organisms to multiply on the eye surface. Remember cats can and do get some 'sleep' in their eyes, nature needs to use some moisture to clear dust and debris from the eye surface.

## PLAY

Play is extremely important for kittens, Try to have a collection of things for him/her to play with, they need not be expensive, old cotton reels, ping pong balls, pipe cleaners, milk bottle caps and the rings around them will all provide hours of fun. Most Devons love to retrieve, lengths of ribbon on any toys may help to encourage them. Praise him/her when he/she does bring his/her toy back to you and throw it again. Never allow your kitten to use their teeth or claws on human flesh. It may seem cute when they are small; however it is not very acceptable when they become fully grown. If he/she does catch your hand, do not pull away, flick his/her nose lightly with your finger and say "no"!

## YOUR DEVON'S SAFETY

### Inside Poisons:

Chocolate, raisins, raw potato. Paracetamol and Aspirin should never be given to cats! Some dog flea preparations can make cats very sick even via contact with the treated dog always check the precautions on the packaging before using flea product on either your cat or dog. Coal tar derivatives such as Dettol, Jeyes Fluid and Pine disinfectants are toxic to cats. Spray and Wipe cleaner is accountable for quite a few cat poisonings. Fly spray; Black Flag, Morteins and other long acting fly sprays can be absorbed off surfaces through your cat/kitten's

paws, they can also become poisoned eating the dead and dying poisoned flies. Some ultra low allergenic sprays are safe with cats. However I favour the use of fly screens and the good old fashioned fly swat. Whatever kills flies in greater quantities would surely kill or harm cats or humans! Mothballs may be played with and paws licked and may cause illness and even death.

Some houseplants can also be toxic and there are many good websites with both [photos and details about garden and houseplants that are poisonous](#) or toxic to pets. I have had two of my kittens poisoned by indoor lilies, both kittens survived but were very sick. Of course kittens are more curious and more likely to chew and sample a variety of objects than adult cats, not unlike children.

#### **Inside Hazards;**

Open Fires, Lazy Boy Chairs, Washing Machines, Freezers, Dishwashers; All of these everyday tools can be hazards to the young inquisitive kitten. Please be aware of where your kitten is before closing clothes dryers, fridges, washing machines, ovens etc. It takes only a moment to check and possibly prevent a tragedy. Rubber bands, string and dental floss can be eaten and cause choking or bowel obstructions.

#### **Outside Poisons;**

Brake fluid and antifreeze are lethal and are attractive and palatable to cats! Cocoa mulch and snail bait as well as insecticides containing permethrins are seriously dangerous to cats. Just like indoor plants can be poisonous so can garden plants and the same precautions should be taken, If your cat does get sick and has been chewing a plant, take a piece of the plant with you to the vets if you do not know the name of it. Not only can plants be poisonous some can also cause local irritation of the skin, eyes or throat, [wandering jew](#) is notorious and is not only common but very vigorous.

#### **OUTSIDE HAZARDS;**

Ensure you know where your cat is before moving vehicles. Roads claim many lives with a large number being cats. A New Zealand pet magazine has published the fact that 94% of cat deaths occur between dusk and dawn. Your kitten has not been allowed outdoors at all yet, if he/she is never out at night, he/she won't know what he/she is missing. Garage Door Openers can have sensitivity adjusted to high to help reduce the chance of a cat or kitten being crushed and it does happen, I have been contacted twice now by distraught owners!

#### **INDOOR/OUTDOOR DILEMA**

Sadly there is no right or wrong answer to this issue, A cat program recently aired on sky television quoted indoor cats as having a life expectancy of 11 years while cats with access to the great outdoors had only an average life expectancy of 3 years. Indoor cats are kept safe from traffic, poisons, many accidents, unpleasant neighbours, and theft! Some people actually think it is cruel to keep their cat indoors only, which is not at all true. In the end this is a decision each owner must come to after giving the issue due consideration. If you do choose to allow them outdoors, start letting them out when they are hungry, so that there is a strong urge to come home when called, and stay out with them initially. ☐☐

Granted time needs to be put into making sure there is adequate stimulation to keep a busy Devon Rex occupied, but knowing they are safe and sound makes any effort well worth the time and expense. There are other alternatives, such as a safe outdoor area, or cat proof fencing.☐

If you decide to allow your cat outdoors PLEASE always bring them in before dusk.

**Traffic;** ☐Moving vehicles are one of the biggest risk factors for cats! A study in UK 2001 found that 51% of outdoor access cats who died suddenly were the result of a cat vs vehicle encounter! They went on to try to identify the risk factors and age was found to be a big contributor, cats between 7 months and 2 years of age are at the highest risk, with the risk decreasing with each year of age, not unlike human teenagers! I have certainly found this to be the case from the many distressed owners who have contacted me after losing their cat on the road. Accidents also happen with vehicles at home, make sure you know where your cat is before moving any vehicle, some cats will even perch on top of warm tyres, while older cats who used to hear and move may be that little bit slower!

#### **BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS**

If for any reason your cat should require a blood transfusion (which is extremely unlikely, but accidents do happen) because they are Devon Rex or Devon Rex Variants they have a good chance of their blood type being 'B'. Your vet needs to be aware of this.

## **YOUR OWN SAFETY**

### **Food Theft;**

Do not leave food unattended, even food no normal cat would consider consuming, as it is likely to be stolen, consumed on site or played with. I have had my devons steal hot food from a spitting frying pan, and flick toast out of the toaster.

### **Drinks;**

Hot or cold drinks can and may very well be tipped over if left unwatched, if they are near electronics or a laptop this can prove to be expensive.

### **Cord and Flexes;**

Devons especially as kittens love to chew and one of their favourite things to chew is fine flexes, such as ipad earphones and mobile phone chargers. Don't say you were not warned, charge them in a cupboard or cat free room. Beware they have also been known to chew them while in use.

### **Paper;**

"The dog ate my homework" may take on new meaning once you are living with a Devon. Some Devons do indeed have paper fetishes and they will destroy papers, books or documents left laying about, Other prefer to make it Christmas inside with the toilet paper. Many Devons behave well around paper, you may be lucky but forewarned is forearmed.

### **Devons are Addictive;**

Devons are totally addictive, BUT think hard before you start adding to your Devon population, a couple of intensely needy, intelligent cats can be a delight to live with, but it is easy to keep adding to your Devon collection and this will often lead to issues regarding territory and your lack of total devotion to the 'chosen one' (and each Devon believes this to be them) may very well cause unwanted behaviour.

## **OTHER CONCERNS**

If for any reason what so ever you are concerned, please feel free to contact us

Judy, Gordon, Joshua, Chloe and Jessica at

Phone/fax (07) 542 0462

Email [devons@kinect.co.nz](mailto:devons@kinect.co.nz)

Web site <http://www.devonrexcats.net>

IF FOR ANY REASON YOU FIND YOURSELF UNABLE TO KEEP YOUR KITTEN,  
PLEASE CONTACT US AND WE WILL HELP IN ANY WAY WE CAN WITH REHOMING

**We hope you will love and enjoy your kitten as much as we have!**