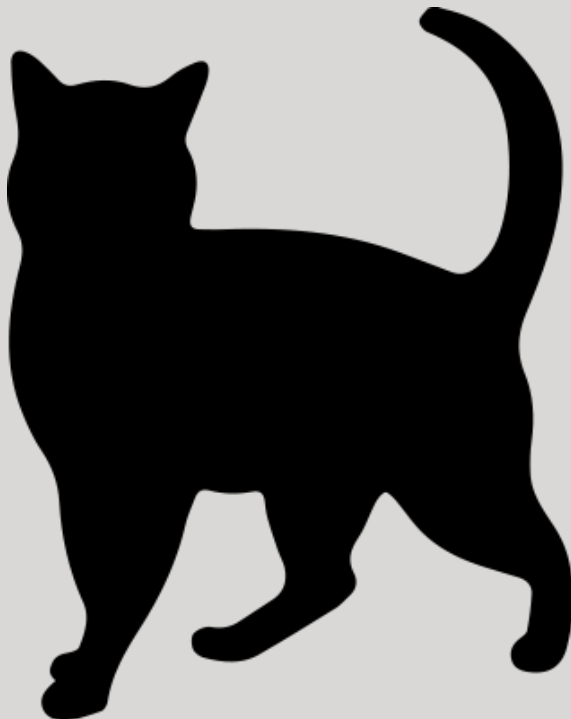


HUMANE SOCIETY



SILICON VALLEY

ADOPTION GUIDE



GARDEN CAT

Name _____

Animal # _____

Microchip# _____

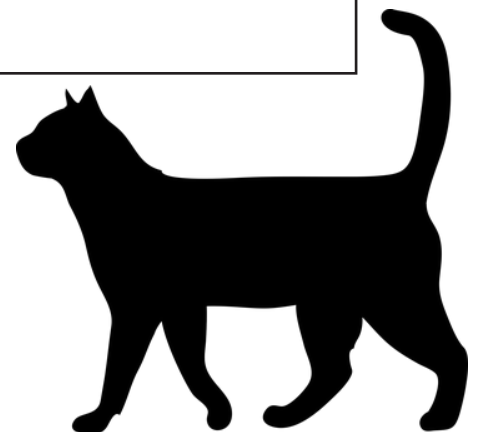
Person # _____

Counselor _____

Share updates or contact us at adoptions@hssv.org

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WHAT'S INCLUDED

The fees for adopting animals allow us provide medical care, food, and shelter the animals in our care.



CORE TREATMENTS*

Dewormer
Flea Treatment
FVRCP
Rabies

**All future treatments and vaccines at cost of adopter.*



SPAY & NEUTER

Cats and kittens adopted through HSSV must be altered prior to adoption.



MICROCHIP

HSSV uses HomeAgain for its microchip services. Animals without microchips will receive one prior to adoption. All microchips will be registered with HomeAgain for the life of the pet at time of adoption.



MEDICAL EXAM & BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT

A copy of the animal's medical history and behavior assessment will be provided to you at the time of adoption. Please consult your vet for any questions on the medical history.

How Does a Cat Become a Garden Cat?

When kittens have no human interaction by 3 months of age, they start becoming fearful of people and the older they become before being found by someone, the less friendly they tend to be. Sometimes people find kittens around this age and try to domesticate them with varying results; cats that will tolerate people to an extent but will likely never be lap cats.

Sometimes a cat refuses to use a litter box even after troubleshooting all solutions, becomes aggressive towards a new family member, or just meows at the door all day and isn't in a good mood unless they get outdoor time.

Garden Cats find their occupation through several means, but one thing remains the same; they're just as deserving of love and care as their domesticated counterparts. It's important to understand that while they can help with pest control on your property, they still need to be provided with food, medical care, and shelter.

Introducing a Garden Cat to their New Home: Steps for Success

Housing Recommendations

Adopters of Garden Cats need a quiet, escape-proof place to confine the cat for the first 3-4 weeks during the acclimation period. This period is crucial in order for the cat to develop an environmental imprint of their surroundings through sight, smell, and sounds; if they wander off on an adventure they need to be able to find their way back.

Per Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) guidelines, cats should be housed:

- With enough space to make normal postural adjustments, e.g., to turn freely and to easily stand, sit, stretch, without touching the top of the enclosure, lie in a comfortable position with limbs extended, move about and assume a comfortable posture for feeding, drinking, urinating and defecating
- With at least 11 cubic feet of living space
- Having at least 2 feet distance between sleeping quarters, litter box, and feeding area
- With places to hide and a higher point than ground level to perch upon (this can be the carrier you bring them home in, left in the acclimation housing)

Common Housing Accommodations

Chicken coops and DIY enclosures are often the best option. Chicken coops that meet minimum spacing requirements, provide a place for hiding, eating, litter box, and lounging by design! DIY enclosures are the most affordable option, and allow the maximum amount of customization to ensure all guidelines are easily met. A quick search online for DIY chicken coops can give you several free blueprint designs to try out.

Garages and ventilated sheds are secure housing locations, but must have at least one screened window they can see out of, cracked open to allow airflow to carry the outside scents in. Make sure any pesticides or poisons are removed from the shed before turning it into your cat's new home. These options can be risky since you have to be careful not to let the cat out when you enter to clean and feed.

XXL Dog Kennels, or ideally two kennels secured together are also an acceptable acclimation housing option if minimum space listed above is met. Place the kennel in a semi-shaded spot on your property so it's not in direct sunlight. If you can raise the kennel off the ground a few feet or more, the added height will make your Garden Cat feel more secure.

CHECK OUT PAGE 10-13 FOR SET UP EXAMPLES

Environmental Recommendations

Having a Garden Cat who lives outside 24/7 means you need to make sure they stay cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Do not rely on their instincts to find appropriate spots or assume they'll find shelter somewhere else.

In the warmer months

- Provide options for your cat to keep cool such as: self-cooling pet beds, raised pet beds, increased airflow, and ice cubes places in water dishes.
- If you notice symptoms of overheating such as: rapid breathing, drooling, vomiting, or howling you should contact your vet immediately. Heat stroke in cats can be fatal.

In the colder months

- Provide an additional insulated shelter for warmth and protection from the elements.
- Insulated or heated outdoor beds are available online, or you can DIY one easily from a large Rubbermaid tote and Styrofoam or straw (not hay).
- Put outdoor heating pads or self-heating pet beds in their shelter.

Releasing Your Garden Cat

Once the acclimation period (3-4 weeks) is up, it's recommended to keep the housing unit set up permanently, or switch over to another type of shelter in the same location.

Purchasing or constructing a special cat house, like the Feral Villa™ (seen below) , is highly recommended. It is designed specifically for protection from predators, and only takes up a small space on your property. [Purchase at www.feralvilla.com](http://www.feralvilla.com)



Multiple Cats

While Garden Cats don't usually enjoy the company of humans, most will enjoy the company of other felines! We wholeheartedly recommend adopting at least two Garden Cats for twice the benefit and so they have companionship in their new home. Having a fellow feline friend also creates another connection to your property, as they can find entertainment and companionship with each other rather than wandering off on adventures.

*Keep in mind with multiple cats you will need to double the housing to space to 22 sq ft minimum.
(11 sq ft minimum per cat)*

Feeding Recommendations

It's important to remember that while your Garden Cat will potentially be eating some of your pests, they still need to be provided fresh food and water on a daily basis for their entire careers.

Cat food both smells and tastes delicious to lots of creatures other than cats.

- To prevent unwanted wildlife and insect visitors, do not leave food out for more than 30 minutes. Placing food out twice per day gives the cats plenty of time to eat and also encourages your cats to come home for meal time. A feeding schedule ensures punctuality, allowing you to consistently check on their wellbeing.
- Sealing bags of both opened and unopened food in plastic containers also deters unwanted pests that could otherwise nibble through the bag if tempted!
- Be aware of pesticide use in your area; run off into water supplies can be fatal to outdoor cats. Providing fresh water daily is a great way to ensure your cat has a safe water source.

Litter Box

Garden Cats should have access to a litter box at all times. Once the confinement period is complete, your cat might choose to do their business out on the property, but it's still good to have the litter box available should they choose to use it. The food should be placed as far away from the litter box as possible in the cat's confinement space, at least 2 ft. Both the litter box and the food should be easily accessible for easy cleaning without entering the cat's space.

- The litter box should be placed close to the entrance.
- Take the litter box out of the acclimation housing in one swift motion; closing the entrance and cleaning the box before placing it back in.
- Keep the entrance to the housing open as little as possible to prevent the possible escape of your furry employee.
- Scoop the litter box at least once daily, and completely change out the litter weekly to avoid odors and attracting predators.

Getting to Know Your Garden Cat

You can increase the likelihood of your cat sticking around if you try to befriend them! This does not mean trying to pet or directly play with them, but giving extra enrichment in their lives.

While they're in the acclimation housing, the more outside environment they can see around them, the better. You can further enrich their experience through:

- Fresh cat grass (remember to water it)
- Periodic sprinkling of catnip or a supplemental catnip toy
- Extra cat treats
- Cat scratchers and toys
- Sitting in their field of vision and just hanging out
- Have conversations within earshot or read outloud
- If you look directly in their eyes, blink slowly several times (this is cat for: "it's ok!")
 - Getting a Garden Cat used to your presence is the first step in befriend them! Remember, many of these cats are fearful of humans, so we need to take small steps in getting closer to them.

By establishing a relationship with your furry employee, they're more likely to hang around more and wander off less. This means more pest control for you too!

Wellbeing and Medical Upkeep

Garden Cats should, like all cats, get an annual physical if possible and updated vaccinations. It's recommended to contact your local vet offices to confirm they work with Garden Cats (also known as Barn Cats or Feral Cats). If you have a scheduled feeding time and shelter area set up, you have won half the battle! Garden Cats usually won't tolerate being picked up to be put in a carrier to visit the vet, so you'll have to trap them with a humane trap; many animal shelters and vet offices will rent out Have-A-Heart traps to catch your furry employee.

Trapping is best done in the morning, preferably before dawn when cats are most active and hungry.

- Place the trap close by their usual feeding area and cover it, leaving the front and back uncovered.
- Most traps have a section in the back that opens; secure it with a carabiner or zip tie so that they can't get out once trapped.
- Bait the trap with tastier than normal breakfast, towards the back (past the pressure plate of the trap).
- Once this is done, go back inside and wait to hear the trap fall.
- Bring your trapped Garden Cat into a more secure location (in your garage or laundry room) until it's time for your appointment.
- DO NOT LEAVE A SET TRAP UNATTENDED.
- Other wildlife can be attracted to the bait and cause the cat distress or you could catch something else by accident!
- Schedule your vet appointment the same day you trap them. It's okay if they sit in the trap for a few hours while they wait for their appointment, but try to have as little time window in between catching and vet visit as possible.

Veterinary Resources for Garden Cats

Parktown Veterinary Hospital

1393 S Park Victoria Dr
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 263-3990
www.parktownvet.com
Parktown offers 50% off first exam.

Adobe Animal Hospital

1600 Soquel Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95065
(831) 462-5293
www.adobe vets.com
Adobe Animal Hospital offers \$20 off exams for new clients.

Alpine Animal Hospital

2460 W El Camino Real
Mountain View, CA, 94040
650-969-8555
www.alpinevetonline.com
Alpine Animal Hospital offers a free exam within 10 days, 14 days basic health coverage.

****It is not recommend to bring a cat to the vet if they are still acclimating, unless they're showing obvious signs of illness. This can stress them out and do more harm than good. We recommend consulting with your vet prior to bring in them in for an appointment.**

Follow Up Support

As with all of our adoptions, HSSV is here to help adopters for life! If ever you have a question or need support just give us a call or send us an e-mail, we're here for you!

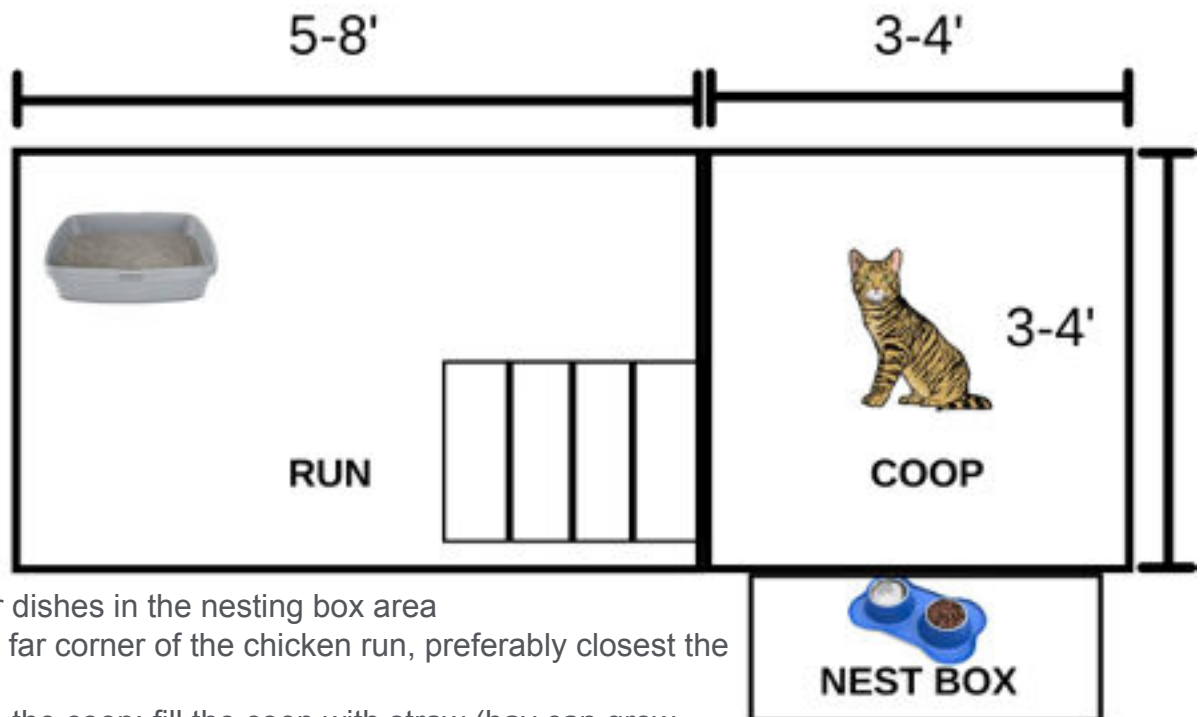
Housing Examples



Chicken Coop

A chicken coop's multiple layers and areas can make a great home for your new garden cat. The compartments that open from the top are the perfect size for a separate sleeping and feeding area. Chicken coops also give the cat a combination of inside and outside space which helps provide enrichment during their confinement period. We recommend getting the largest coop you can find, as oftentimes the more readily available ones are meant for 1-3 small birds and can be a little cramped for cats.

Purchase on Amazon: Product # B078LMQWR5 (Approx \$449.98)
PawHut Large Wooden Outdoor Cat House with Large Run



Setup:

- Food and water dishes in the nesting box area
- Litter box in the far corner of the chicken run, preferably closest the entrance
- Bedding area is the coop; fill the coop with straw (hay can grow mold)
- Enrichment items in the chicken run area
- A raised platform or bed can be placed in the run for added extra luxury

Housing Examples



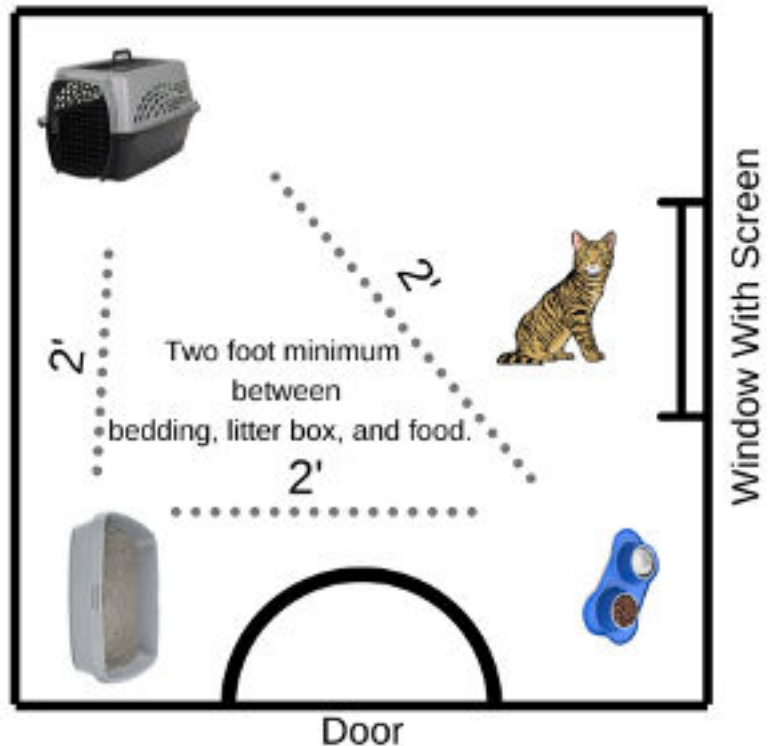
Garden Shed

This could be a great reason to clear out your garden shed! Cats love to climb on shelves and make themselves at home under your workbench. Adding an optional screened-in porch can give your cats extra field of vision to better acclimate to their new environment. A minimum of one window is required for housing in a shed; cats have to be able to see the outside during their acclimation period in order to memorize their environment.

Be careful each time you open the door to the shed; crack it open and make sure your cat isn't going to run out when you open the door.

Setup:

- The litter box should be closest to the entrance
- Clean up and remove any pesticides or poisons from the shed
- A minimum distance of 2 feet between bedding, food, and litter box
- A perch near the window enables your cat to scout their new territory comfortably
- Keep screened window open to allow for constant air flow if possible



Housing Examples



XXL Large Dog Crate / 2 Large Dog Crates Connected

A dog crate can make an acceptable housing solution for your cat, if it contains a minimum of 11sq ft of spacing per cat. This is equal to an XXL crate, or connecting 2 crates at least sized large. You can compare an XXL crate to yourself living in a small garden shed, so it's the least favorable option, but it is an option.

Purchase on Amazon: Product # B005VWVBVY (Approx \$152) MidWest Homes for Pets XXL Giant Dog Crate [54-Inch Long Ginormous Dog Crate

Setup for an XXL:

- Arrange the litter box, carrier, and food bowls in such a way that they're all as far away from each other as possible
- Raise the kennel off the ground if possible by placing on a pallet or 2x4s
- Place the crate in a partially shaded area and protected from the elements if it rains; Foldout Canopies are a great way to achieve this
- You can also cover 1/3 of the crate with a tarp or towel



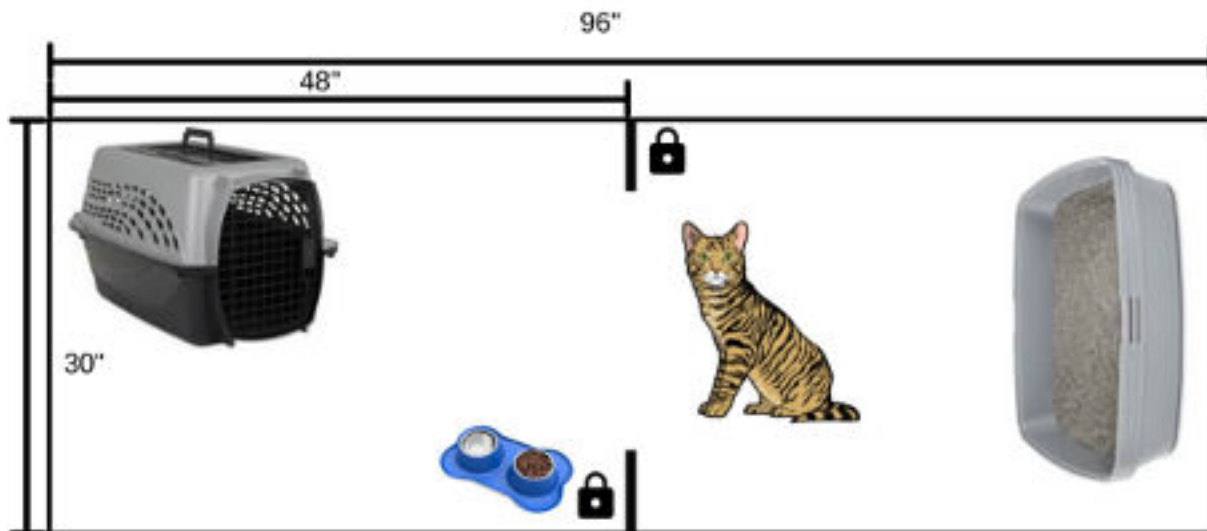
Housing Examples



Purchase on Amazon: Product # B01MZI6TAI (Approx \$159)
PawHut 87" x 41" Outdoor Metal Pet Enclosure Small Animal

Setup for 2 Connected Crates:

- Two crates can be connected if at least one of them has 2 doors, this is usually a similar cost to an XXL crate, and gives you more space to work with
- Align the open entrances and connect them with zip ties
- Place the litter box near the remaining accessible entrance
- Food and bedding (carrier) should be placed as far away from each other and the litter box as possible
- Adding in a cardboard box or a single platform cat tree can provide a second layer for the cat to rest on
- Crates with multiple doors are helpful, as this gives you a way to clean the litter box and add more food and water safely



2 XL DOG KENNELS ATTACHED

NEXT STEPS

Mandatory Items

- ☐ Secure medium hard sided animal crate (Not wire crate). (One per cat).
- ☐ Secure Housing (Housing must be set up prior to taking home garden cat)

1. Pick up basic supplies

- ☐ Food (Hills Science Diet Adult Cat dry and wet food)
- ☐ Litter Scoop
- ☐ Litter Box/Unscented litter
- ☐ Scratcher
- ☐ Enrichment Items

Additional Supplies

- ☐ Comfy Bed
- ☐ Bowls

2. Complete Microchip Registration

We started your microchip registration for your new pet in the Home Again database. Log into their website to complete the registration at www.homeagain.com.

3. Contact a Vet

Since most garden cats prefer to keep to themselves it can be difficult to take your cat to the vet for vaccines and treatments. We recommend contacting a vet from the referral page within 1-2 weeks of adoption to create a plan for future vet visits. Many medical clinics will rent or loan you a trap to catch your cat to bring them in for exams or treatments.

4. Diet

While in our care your cat has been eating **Hills Science Diet dry and canned wet food**. You can use the feeding guidelines on the back of the packaging or speak with your vet to determine appropriate amounts. Your chosen veterinarian can also serve as a resource to provide advice about which diet is best for your new pet.

Tip: If you decide to change food, slowly integrate the new food rather than all at once.

RESOURCES

Behavioral Resources

Check out list of comprehensive behavior resources for cat parents at hssv.org/resources



If you need to return an animal for any reason please reach out to our intake department at 408.262.2133 x110. Returns are by appointment only. Adoption fees are non-refundable, and after 90 days surrender fees apply.