

# Top 10 Items Every Cat Household Should Have by This Old Cat

As you strive to be the best caregiver for your cat, we feel there are ten items that every cat household should have in order to help you along the way! They are (in no particular order):

## Item #1: Baby Scale



You can tell so much about a cat's health simply by their weight, so a scale is an excellent tool for you to use:

- Weight loss *or* weight gain could be signs of underlying issues
- Often times weight may change before a cat shows any clinical signs of a health problem
- Weigh monthly, weekly or daily depending on your cat's situation
- Keep records & track a cat's weight using our *Cat History Chart* (sample on page 5)

The best, most accurate and dependable baby scale we've found is the MyWeigh Ultra Baby Scale (pictured above): <https://myweigh.com/product/ultrascale-mbsc-55/>

## Item #2: Stethoscope



A cat's heart is an **incredibly** hardworking organ, pumping blood and sustaining life. For the average cat their heart may beat over **15 million times** in their lifetime! So it's a good idea for you to keep tabs on your cat's heart by listening to their heart rates, and listening for any abnormalities. You should be able to buy a good-working stethoscope at your local pharmacy or online, often for less than \$25.

Once you have your stethoscope, ask your vet to demonstrate how to best use it. They can provide you with the ideal **beats per minute** for your cat.

Different health and/or environmental conditions may affect the speed of your cat's heartbeats:

- **Normal** – such as resting at home
- **Fast** – often brought on by things such as nervousness, pain or anemia
- **Slow** – which may be caused by issues like low body temperature or low blood sugar

And a few abnormalities sometimes seen in cats are:

- “Whooshing” sound – often caused by a *heart murmur*
- Irregular beat – called an *arrhythmia*
- Your vet can provide you with more information about abnormalities in cats' hearts

## Item #3: Watch, Stopwatch or Wrist Watch



Any one of these will work, so long as it has a **second hand** for you to time out your counts for 15 seconds.

In addition to using it with your stethoscope (above) you also can use the watch to count your cat's **breaths per minute** (best done when they are sleeping, by counting the number of times their chest goes up & down for 15 seconds and then multiplying that number by 4 to get breaths per minute).

Your vet can best provide the ideal breaths per minute for when your cat is at home.

#### Item #4: Ear Thermometer



Knowing your cat's body temperature is a **good** thing! Too **low** (possible *hypothermia*) or too **high** (possible *fever* and/or *infection*) may mean they are in need of immediate vet care.

Your vet can best provide the ideal body temperature for your cat.

For accuracy and dependability we prefer the **Pet-Temp Ear Thermometer** (pictured at left): <https://www.admon.com/diagnostic-pet-products-for-home-use/> and remember to always keep a supply of **lens covers** for this on hand, too!

#### Item #5: Rectal Thermometer



While the ear thermometer works well in most cases, if ever in doubt, recheck your cat's body temperature with a rectal thermometer.

You should be able to buy digital rectal thermometer at your local pharmacy or online for less than \$20

Your vet can demonstrate how to use one for your cat.

#### Item #6: Pill Splitter

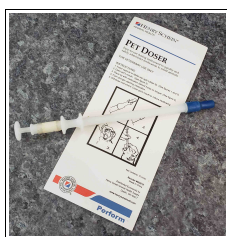


A pill splitter makes quick and accurate work of cutting pills down to size, and works with most sizes of pills.

We prefer a basic splitter – such as the **Ezy Dose Pill Cutter** (pictured at left): <https://www.amazon.com/Dose-Original-Pill-Cutter-Splitter/dp/B0000532OV>

Be sure to first check with your vet or pharmacist to confirm it's OK to split a particular pill.

#### Item #7: Pet Piller



A pet piller makes for quick and easy pilling, even with the most difficult-to-pill cat! We find it best when used **with capsules** (Item #8, below).

But don't skimp here, as the cheap pillers only make it harder to pill the cat and often are of questionable quality. We only use the **Henry Schein #004018** (pictured at left), which you should be able to get through your vet or online at: <https://www.ebay.com/p/2074795671>

Even the best of these wear out and the rubber tip cracks over time so be sure to inspect yours daily and replace the pet piller if in doubt.

#### Item #8: Empty Gel Capsules



These make it **so much easier** when your cat is getting more than one pill at a time, especially when using a Pet Piller (Item #7, above)! We generally use the #2 size and #3 most of the time, sometimes the smaller #4 size (with capsules, the higher the number the smaller the size). Even if a cat is getting just one pill we've found putting it in an empty gel cap and using the Pet Piller ensures the cat swallows the pill with ease! Be sure to check with your pharmacist or vet to confirm it's OK to combine different medications into one capsule.

(...Item #8: Empty Gel Capsules, continued...)



When buying empty capsules on-line, for your cat's safety you want to make sure you know *where* they are produced! We avoid gel caps when we don't know where they are manufactured. We've found **Capsuline** (pictured at left): <https://capsuline.com> offers the best empty gel caps because they are a quality brand with a good selection of sizes & colors and are reasonably priced... and as a bonus, they have lot number traceability. We buy different sizes in different colors so that we know which colors are what size.

### Item #9: First Aid Kit



Did you know that, on average, **every 2.5 seconds** a pet receives emergency medical care? Because of this, having a **well-stocked first aid kit** in your home is one of *best* things you could buy for your cat (*and* for your peace of mind!). As a cat caregiver you should know how to identify an injury and what to do about it – whether you should perform first aid yourself *or* seek immediate emergency veterinary care.

Here are some of the many different types of **cat injuries** requiring medical attention:

Animal bite	Bleeding	Bloating	Broken bones
Broken tail	Burns	Chemical burn	Choking
Convulsion/seizuring	Diarrhea	Electrical shock	Evisceration
Eye injury	Fish hooks	Frostbite	Gunshot wound
Heatstroke	Hematoma	Hypothermia	Insect Bites
Poisoning	Thromboembolism	Unconsciousness	Urinary blockage

Being prepared to administer aid to your cat, **your first aid kit** should include items such as:

White adhesive tape	Gauze bandage	Self-adhering wrap	Sterile gauze pads
Hydrogen peroxide	Flashlight	Small penlight	Mineral oil
Antibacterial ointment	Oral dosage syringes	Activated charcoal	Ice pack
Heat pack	Sterile solution	Empty plastic bottle	Blanket
Towels	Wash clothes	Paper towels	Baby wipes
Tweezers	Scissors	Nail clippers	Wire cutters
Latex gloves	Cotton swabs	Absorbent pads	Bandage scissors
Wooden Tongue depressors	Isopropyl alcohol	Splints	

Your vet may recommend adding other items to your kit specific to your cat's needs.



And we strongly suggest that you get **Pet First Aid Training**. Check with your local humane society to see if there are Pet First Aid classes in your area or visit **The American Red Cross** web site for information about their online course for Pet First Aid: <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/first-aid/cat-dog-first-aid>

## Item # 10: Nail Clippers



The Humane Society of the United States reminds us that trimming a cat's claws every few weeks is an important part of maintaining your cat's health. Not only does a quick trim protect you, your family and your other pets, it can also save your furniture.

There are many different styles of nail clippers for cats. We recommend shopping around to find one that best fits your hand and are the easiest for you to use.

Your vet can show you how to use them to **avoid** cutting into the “quick”.

Here is a link to the The Humane Society of the United States' article on trimming cat's nails: <https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/trimming-cats-claws>

### And we do have a few items that didn't quite make the Top 10 but we feel deserve an “Honorable Mention”:

- ✓ **Combs** – a household with cats **cannot** have *too* many combs!
- ✓ **Electric Clippers** – over the years we've tried many different clippers to clip our cat's fur, but settled on the very reasonably priced “Oneisall” brand for best results:  
<https://www.amazon.com/ONEISALL-Clippers-Rechargeable-Cordless-Electric/dp/B01HRSZRXM>
- ✓ **Blood Glucose Meter** – when you need to check your cat's blood glucose levels, hands down the AlphaTrak is the best there is:  
<https://www.zoetispetcare.com/products/alphatrak>

For more information, please visit us online at  
<https://www.TheSunshineHome.com>

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# Cat History Chart

Cat's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:	Note: