I FOUND KITTENS – WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Finding kittens alone doesn't always mean they've been abandoned.

THE ESSENTIALS

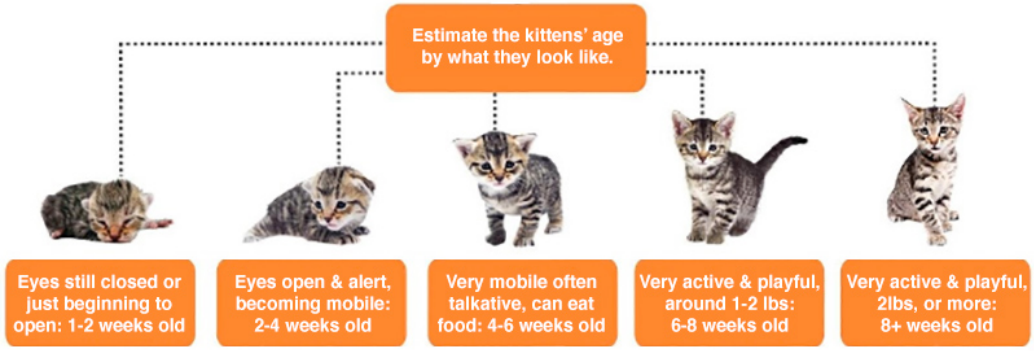
Don't assume kittens found alone are orphans. Mother cats regularly leave their kittens to find food and may stay away while people are nearby. If the kittens appear healthy and are in a safe location, their best chance is usually to stay with their mother until they are old enough to be weaned.

DO THE KITTENS NEED IMMEDIATE HELP?

Healthy kittens who are warm, clean and sleeping quietly are likely being cared for. Kittens who are cold, dirty or visibly thin may need help.

- **Are the kittens sick, injured or in immediate danger?** If a kitten is injured, cold to the touch, having difficulty breathing, or otherwise appears seriously ill, intervention may be necessary. If the kittens are in immediate physical danger — such as near traffic, construction or another serious hazard — move them to a safer location nearby where their mother can still find them.
- **If mom is around or returns:** Leave the family together. You can help by providing mom with food, fresh water and a safe place to care for her kittens. When the kittens are about 8 weeks old, have mom and the kittens spayed or neutered.

How old are the kittens?



Source: Stray Cat Alliance: https://straycatalliance.org/resources/kittens101/assessing-kittens/

IF THE KITTENS NEED HELP

- **If mom does not return after you've observed from a distance for several hours:** The kittens may need human care. Young kittens can require frequent feeding, warmth and other care.
- **Can you temporarily care for them?** They may need an immediate vet visit or time in a home while you figure out next steps. **SBACC can provide kitten care kits if you can care for them until they are ready to be weaned.**
- **Contact local rescue organizations and shelters.** During kitten season, shelters and rescues may have limited space, so contacting several organizations may be necessary.

SBACC MAY BE ABLE TO HELP

Seal Beach Animal Care Center may be able to accept a litter when shelter space and an appropriate foster home are available. Please contact us before bringing kittens to the shelter. We can talk through the situation and determine what this particular litter needs. **Because capacity changes frequently, we cannot guarantee intake.**

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- **Best Friends Animal Society**: bestfriends.org/pet-care-resources/found-kittens-what-do. Step-by-step guidance for determining whether kittens need help, estimating their age and caring for orphaned kittens.
- **Helen Sanders CatPAWS**: helensanderscatpaws.com/help-i-found-a-cat/. Local guidance and resources for people who find cats and kittens in the community.

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