

## The Importance of Play

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Cats at home Feline Hospital

Around weaning time, kittens begin to show an interest in playing with objects. In doing so, they start to go through the motions of stalking, chasing and pouncing which teaches them how to hunt. They also use their paws to bat and swat at things which helps develop eye and paw coordination. By 10 to 12 weeks of age, locomotory play is fully developed involving running, climbing and jumping, all of which are important for developing agility and coordination. Kittens who are somewhat shy and reserved can benefit from play, as they build their self-confidence when they tussle with littermates, play fight and learn play escape behaviours. Play is a vital part of normal development to help kittens develop social, predatory and locomotory skills and it is very important for humans to provide lots of safe toys and areas for kittens to explore in our indoor environments.

