



# Preparing for Your Savannah Kitten's Arrival

by Cory Bixbe

Congratulations on deciding to add a Savannah kitten to your family! It's time to get ready for a wild ride. Savannahs are full of personality and mischief and they are guaranteed to steal your heart. There are many things you can do ahead of time to prepare for your new kitten's arrival to ease the transition for both your family and your new furry bundle.



## Creating a Savannah Baby Room

Chances are there will be times that you will not be able to supervise your kitten. Setting aside a room that your new baby can spend his/her alone time in is a great way to keep your new kitten out of trouble and keep you from worrying. While you will want to be sure to kitten proof your entire home, the kitten's room should be made extra secure.

When left on their own, kittens can get into a lot of different things. In this room you will want to include just the basics: litter box, food bowls, very safe toys, and perhaps a small piece of cat furniture. Sparsely furnished rooms with a door that closes securely work best. Many

people have set up spare bedrooms, bathrooms, or their master bedroom as their kitten's room.

## Savannah Proofing Your Home

Savannahs by nature are very athletic, inquisitive cats and can get up to quite a bit more mischief than other cat breeds. Some things to keep in as you prepare your home for your new arrival are:

**Chewing** - Savannahs, especially Savannah kittens, love to chew. They can be very destructive to their toys and must be given appropriate, safe items to chew on. Electrical cords pose a very dangerous problem. Spraying all electrical cords with a chew deterrent such as Bitter Apple, or coating in an unpleasant liquid like Tabasco help to avoid accidents. Remember to recoat the wires as necessary until your kitten learns that the cords are off limits.

**Jumping** - Savannahs can jump much higher and further than other domestic cats. Even young kittens can easily get to the top of dressers and it's not long until the kitchen countertops are within their reach. Be sure to move fragile items to a higher location. Also be sure to put out of reach any items that could be chewed apart or are small enough to pose a choking hazard.

**Water** - Water is great fun for Savannahs. They love to play in it or put their toys in it to practice "fishing". It's a good idea to keep all toilet lids closed at all times. All kittens are at a risk to accidentally fall in, but Savannahs may surprise you and try to jump in! Be sure to keep your drinking glasses out of reach or switch to a sports type water bottle. Savannahs just love to knock over water glasses. They will also knock over or drag around their water bowl too if given the opportunity. A great way to avoid the puddles of over turned water bowls is to purchase either a spill proof bowl or a heavy-duty non-skid bowl used for dogs.



**Plants** - Because chewing is in their nature, household plants can pose a risk. Research what plants could be deadly for your kitten and remove them from your home, or place them in an area the kitten has no way of getting to. Check with your veterinarian for a list of harmful plants or visit <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/alphalist.html> online.

**Trash Cans** – Savannahs love to explore everything in your home, including the trash. If your trash cans are left out in the open in the kitchen or the bath, you may want to consider purchasing trash cans with flip top lids or secure covers. Not all Savannahs will get into the trash, but for those who do a covered trash can save you from cleaning up messes and from ingesting something it shouldn't.

## Toys

### *What to Avoid*

Savannah kittens love to play! You may be surprised how quickly they will destroy their toys. If you are ever in doubt of the safety of a toy, keep it locked up when you are not there to supervise. Only leave out the toys you know will be absolutely safe for your kitten.

### **Toys to avoid giving your new kitten include:**

- String
- Mini foam balls
- Small stuffed toys with pieces that are easily pulled off
- Foil



### **Toys that can be fun and safe for your new kitten include:**

- Paper bags or cardboard boxes
- Tennis balls (small and large)
- Sturdy stuffed animals designed for dogs and heavy chewers help to protect your kitten

(But remember to throw out the stuffed animal before it becomes over chewed and your kitten is in danger of swallowing fabric or stuffing.)

### **Savannah Kitten Supply List**

- Food (Be sure to find out what your breeder has been feeding the kitten and have the same food ready when your kitten arrives.)
- Water bowl (Check the dog supplies area for non-skid or spill proof bowls)
- Food bowl or plate
- Litter box (Small enough for the kitten to climb in and out of easily)
- Litter (Again, check with your breeder to find out what litter the kitten is used to. Any sudden change in litter substrate could lead to a litter box protest)
- Scratching post or small size cat tree
- Toys (Interactive toys for you to play with your kitten and toys that the kitten can play with on his/her own)
- Carrier or crate for trips in the car.
- Kitten size halter (If you are interested in leash training, it's good to start while they are young.)

Good luck! You are well on your way to preparing a safe home and raising a healthy and happy kitten. As you raise your kitten, you might find new tips and tricks to Savannah proof a home, be sure to share your experiences and advice with your friends and fellow Savannah owners in the Savannah Cat Club. By doing so, you help to raise yet another generation of happy, healthy kittens.