



Beware of online kitten scams

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a rise of kittens advertised for sale online. To avoid being scammed, follow our tips.



Paying over the odds

Some sellers are hiking up prices for kittens as the demand is currently high.

- 'Moggy' kittens (tabbies, ginger, black and white) that may previously have sold for £50 each have been seen advertised as high as £350
- Purebred pedigrees are being advertised in the £1,000s



Is the seller licensed?

If they're charging high prices and seem to be advertising regularly, they may be running a business. Commercial sellers must be licensed or registered by the local authority. Make sure you:

- spot a licence or registration number included in any online adverts
- research the seller as well as the kittens themselves



Deposit scams

Beware of paying upfront deposits for kittens you've never met. Be wary of:

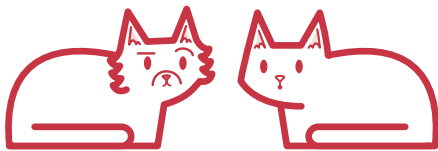
- sellers that ask for further funds to cover 'unforeseen costs' like pet insurance or vaccinations
- purchasing a pedigree? Genuine deposits can be taken at the time of reservation after viewing at around 8-9 weeks but most registration policies prefer pedigree kittens to remain in the breeder's home until 13-14 weeks of age – after their second vaccination



Get proof of pedigree

Looking for a purebred cat, like a Siamese, Ragdoll or British shorthair? Remember to:

- do your research! Seek out a registered breeder
- insist on a registration certificate. Only a certificate from a breed association is proof of pedigree
- don't be scammed by sellers offering to post certificates to you after you've bought the cat



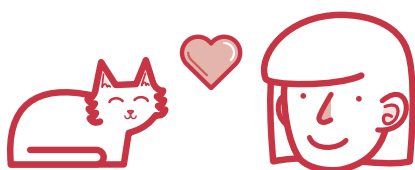
Don't be fooled by "pedigree-crosses"

- Any cat advertised as a "pedigree-cross" is not a pedigree. They may have some pedigree ancestry but are still considered a "moggy" (non-purebred)
- Some sellers may use "pedigree-cross" to suggest pedigree status and hike up prices



What can I do if I've been scammed?

- Report it to the police by calling **101** (only use **999** in an emergency) and to Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** or at www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Get advice about reporting scams from Citizens Advice website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk



And finally...consider adopting over 'shopping'

Have you considered getting a kitten or cat from Cats Protection? All our cats are vet checked, microchipped, de-fleaed and wormed, vaccinated and neutered if appropriate. Call us on **03000 12 12 12** or visit www.cats.org.uk/find-a-cat

For more tips on avoiding scams when buying a kitten during COVID-19, visit www.cats.org.uk/buying-a-kitten-online