

# Meet Flossie, Officially the World's Oldest Cat

Equivalent to 120 human years, Flossie is not only a world record holder, but she's outlived two of her previous three owners. Now with her fourth and final guardian, see how she's acclimating to her new forever home.

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## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- The world's oldest cat, 27-year-old Flossie, lives in the U.K. with her fourth and final guardian, who adopted the then 26-year-old cat when owner number three could no longer care for her
- Flossie's hearing and vision aren't what they once were, but she's an otherwise healthy cat, and sometimes even kittenish!
- Senior cats can make wonderful companions, especially for people who don't want to ride out the rowdy "kitten stage"
- Adopting a senior cat also means you'll be saving a life, because older cats are among the hardest pets for shelters to place
- To help them fully enjoy their golden years, it's important to provide older cats with more frequent wellness exams, a stress-free environment, the right diet and supplement protocol, and physical and mental stimulation

The world's oldest living cat, according to **Guinness World Records**, a feline named Flossie, turned an amazing 27 years old (120 in human years!) at the end of 2022. The very senior kitty, born on December 29, 1995, lives in the U.K. and was rescued as a stray kitten.

According to cat mom Vicki Green, who adopted **Flossie** in August 2022 after she was relinquished to U.K.-based charity Cats Protection, though Flossie's vision and hearing aren't the best, she's otherwise in good health and still acts like a kitten.

*"I knew from the start that Flossie was a special cat, but I didn't imagine I'd share my home with a world record holder," Green said in a statement. "I've always wanted to give older cats a comfortable later life.*

*She's so affectionate and playful, especially sweet when you remember how old she is. I'm immensely proud that Cats Protection matched me with such an amazing cat."<sup>1</sup>*

## Flossie's 26-Year Journey to Her Final Forever Home

Flossie has been the member of several families over the years. She was found as a newborn near a hospital in 1995, and was adopted by a health care worker. When her first owner passed away 10 years later, Flossie went to live with that woman's sister, who cared for her for 14 years until she also passed away. The second owner's son gave Flossie a home for the next three years, at which point she arrived at Cats Protection.

*"We were flabbergasted when we saw that Flossie's vet records showed her to be [around] 27 years old," said Naomi Rosling, branch coordinator at Cats Protection.<sup>2</sup>*

Since August, Flossie has acclimated to her final forever home with Green, who has done everything possible to ensure her cat feels welcome and loved in the final chapter of her life.

*"She was loud for the first few nights, because she can't see in the dark and was a bit confused in her new surroundings, but she sleeps through the night now, snuggled on the bed with me," Green told the BBC. "Older cats can need particular care and being the oldest living cat, Flossie isn't any different. She sometimes misses her litter box or needs help grooming herself, but I can help with all of that. We're in this together."<sup>3</sup>*

## 6 Great Reasons to Adopt a Senior Cat

1. **The cat you see is the cat you get** — A kitten, like any young animal, is a work in progress. It's difficult to tell by a kitten's behavior what type of personality she'll have as an adult. Some kittens grow into affectionate lap cats; others develop a strong independent streak.

If you're looking for a certain type of personality in your new feline family member, keep in mind that with a senior kitty, what you see is what you get. Her personality is already formed.

Do keep in mind that every animal will behave a bit differently once comfortable in a new forever home than she does in a shelter environment.

2. **You can avoid the rowdy "kitten stage"** — Senior kitties, much like senior humans, are mature and sedate. If you're not interested in wrangling an active, inquisitive kitten, an older cat is the perfect alternative. Of course, that's not to say your senior kitty won't enjoy playtime and other activities with his new family. All cats benefit from interactive play, regular exercise, and environmental enrichment.
3. **Many senior cats are successfully litter box and scratching post trained** — Most senior kitties are accustomed to using a litter box and many have also been trained to use appropriate scratching surfaces.
4. **Many senior cats like to cuddle** — Older kitties, like older folks, enjoy napping. So if the idea of a small, warm furry body curled up in your lap appeals to you, a senior cat could be just what you're looking for.

And if you think about it from your kitty's perspective, imagine how wonderful it feels to go from a scary, noisy shelter kennel to the warmth and safety of your home and lap.

5. **Senior cats have a lot of living left to do** — Kitties are considered senior when they reach 11 years of age, and geriatric at 15. But many cats today live into their late teens or early twenties (and in Flossie's case, far beyond!), so a kitty considered senior can still be a wonderful companion for years to come. This is especially true of indoor-only cats fed species-specific nutrition who also receive regular veterinary wellness exams.
6. **You're saving a life** — Senior cats are traditionally among the hardest animals for shelters and rescue organizations to rehome, so when you adopt a senior kitty, you're quite literally saving a pet's life. You're also

giving your new cat the opportunity to live out the rest of his years in comfort and dignity. Your senior kitty will reward your kindness with attention, affection, and gratitude.

## 5 Ways to Provide a Good Quality of Life for Your Aging Cat

1. **Spend time with your cat every day** — Set aside time each day to hang out with your kitty. If she tolerates being brushed or combed, work that into the daily schedule as well, to help her with grooming chores. Trimming the hair around the perineal area is usually much appreciated by older cats.

Make sure meals are provided on a consistent schedule, along with playtime and petting/lap time. Organic catnip or silver vine can be a very effective way to encourage your cat to play.

2. **Provide a nutritionally optimal, species-specific diet** — Contrary to what many cat parents and even veterinarians believe, aging pets need more healthy protein than their younger counterparts, and the quality is extremely important.

The more digestible and assimilable the protein is (cat food made with human-grade meat), and the higher the moisture content of the food (no dry food), the easier it will be for aging organs to process. If you haven't slowly swapped your kibble for more moisture-dense food, the sooner you do this, the healthier your cat will be.

Feed your cat a nutritionally balanced, antioxidant rich, carnivore-friendly diet that includes omega-3 essential fats such as sustainably sourced krill oil. Allow her to fulfill her drive to hunt prey by treating her to an indoor hunting feeder containing small amounts of freeze-dried meat treats.

Be sure to encourage water-drinking by offering your cat a variety of stainless steel water bowls around the house or a drinking fountain, in addition to minimizing or (preferably) eliminating dry food. If she's addicted to a poor-quality, highly processed diet and efforts to upgrade the food she eats have failed, consider adding additional moisture to her food in the form of bone broth.

3. **Provide appropriate supplementation** — Offering your cat SAMe (S-adenosylmethionine) is a safe and effective way to stall mental decline, improve mobility, and assist in liver detoxification. Consult your integrative veterinarian for the right dose size.

Periodic detoxification with milk thistle, superoxide dismutase (SOD) and dandelion can also be very beneficial, as can providing kidney-supportive NAC (n-acetyl cysteine) and super green foods in the form of fresh "cat grass" to nibble on. Chlorophyll, chlorella, or spirulina can also be offered in supplement form to enhance your cat's detoxification processes if they won't eat any fresh foods.

Medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) have been shown to be safe for cats and can improve brain energy metabolism and decrease the amyloid protein buildup that results in brain lesions in older pets. Coconut oil is a rich source of MCTs and may also reduce hairball issues.

I recommend working up to 1/4 teaspoon for every 10 pounds of body weight twice daily for basic MCT support, if your cat will voluntarily eat it. Start by adding a drop at a time.

For aging kitties who prowl the house at night and vocalize, consider a CBD product designed for cats that not only has a calming effect, but can help with pain. I also use rhodiola, valerian, chamomile, and L-theanine with

good results in restless cats. Always make sure you check your cat's thyroid function if you notice an increase in nighttime activity and vocalizations prior to starting supplements.

4. **Provide opportunities for physical and mental stimulation** — Keep your cat's body and mind active with regular exercise appropriate for his age and physical condition (feather toys may still be engaging), and mental stimulation (treat-release toys hidden around the house can be beneficial).

Think of creative ways to enrich your cat's indoor environment and if he never touches the earth's surface directly (most housecats don't), consider a grounding pad to help reduce the buildup of EMFs.

Regular massage can help keep your senior cat's muscles toned and reduce the slackening that comes with aging. Massaged muscles are looser, which makes it easier for pets to move around comfortably. Massage also improves circulation, encourages lymphatic drainage, and eases joint stiffness and is something you can learn to do at home.

5. **Provide comfort for an aging body** — If your cat seems physically uncomfortable, it's important not to assume it's just a natural part of aging. You want to make sure she's not in pain, so a visit to your veterinarian is needed. The sooner a health problem is diagnosed and treated, in most cases, the better the outcome.

Keeping your cat at a good weight and physically active will help control arthritis and degenerative joint disease as she ages. Chiropractic adjustments and acupuncture can also be very helpful in keeping her fully mobile in her later years. My elderly cat absolutely loves his supplemental source of heat (an infrared heat pad on his favorite chair).

There are a wide range of supplements that can be added to your cat's diet to help maintain healthy tendons, ligaments, joints and cartilage. These include:

- Glucosamine sulfate with MSM, eggshell membrane and perna mussel slow cartilage degeneration
- Omega-3 fats (DHA and EPA) reduce inflammation
- Natural anti-inflammatory or pain management formulas (herbs, homeopathics and nutraceuticals, including boswellia blends)

In addition, talk to your vet about an Assisi Loop, which can be very beneficial for cats with arthritis.

Also ensure your cat can get into and out of the litterbox easily and monitor litter box habits on a daily basis. Remember that kitties are very adept at hiding arthritis and other aches and pains, which can limit their ability to climb into high-sided boxes, or boxes kept in bathtubs or up a flight of stairs, for example.

## Sources and References

<sup>1, 2</sup> [New York Post, December 1, 2022](#)

<sup>3</sup> [BBC, November 23, 2022](#)

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