

## Choosing a boarding cattery

Many people become anxious at the thought of leaving their beloved cat in someone else's care while they are away, some to the extent that they feel unable to go on holiday - even for a couple of days. But there are excellent boarding catteries available – how do you gauge the quality?

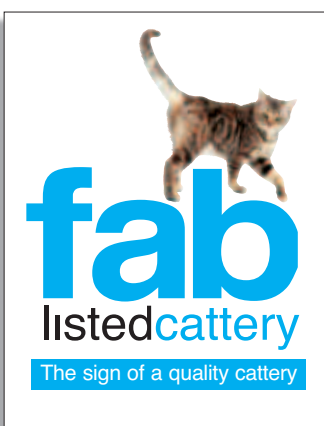
### Finding the right cattery

You may be lucky enough to live within a reasonable distance of a FAB Listed Cattery. These catteries have been inspected by FAB and measured against FAB's Standard for Construction and Management of Boarding Catteries. Both the physical construction and day-to-day management of the cattery are taken into account and Listing is a sure sign that the standards of cat accommodation and care are excellent. For information and a list of FAB Listed Catteries contact FAB at the address overleaf (Our Good Cattery Guide costs £3.50) or visit our website:

[www.fabcats.org](http://www.fabcats.org)

FAB listed catteries can display the sign (shown here) on their stationery, website and at their premises.

There may be many catteries in your area - how do you choose? You have to check out the catteries for yourself. Make an appointment to look around - if the proprietor refuses to let you see the premises then go elsewhere.

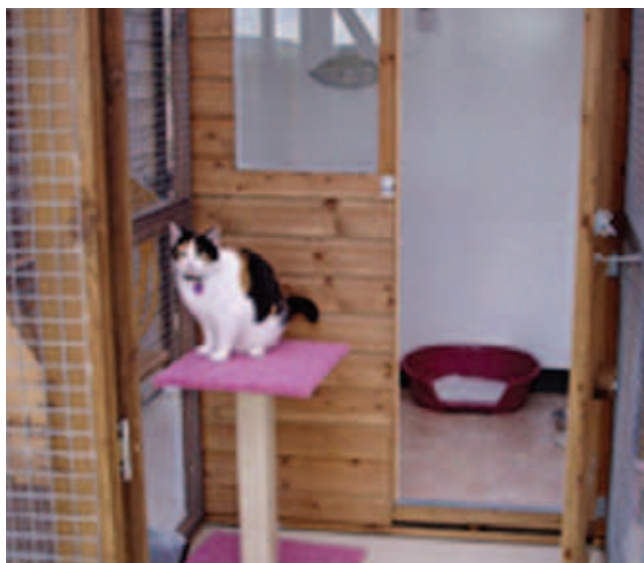


### Types of catteries

Catteries are generally classified as outdoor (individual cat units have an outdoor run) or indoor (with no outdoor run). FAB prefers outdoor catteries because most cats enjoy being able to go out and watch the world go by; it also helps to ensure there is good ventilation and airflow to prevent the spread of disease.

### Good cattery design should ensure that:

- The cat accommodation has a separate enclosed sleeping area with its own individual exercise run.



- There is a 'safety corridor' or double doors which would prevent any cat which gets out of its unit from escaping into the great outdoors.
- There is no possibility of cats from different households coming into direct contact with each other. There are gaps between units or, if units are joined together, impervious barriers (often made of perspex) to prevent cats sneezing on or touching one another.
- Cats have an interesting view to stimulate them.
- Each unit is insulated, easily cleanable and has some form of heating.

Housing which allows cats from different households to come into contact with each other (or each other's faeces) increases the potential for the spread of disease. Thus catteries which house cats all together or use a common exercise area are to be avoided. Cat cages without runs should also be avoided – cats need space to exercise and move around.

### Good cattery management

A good proprietor should:

- Ask for information about your cat
- Insist on up-to-date vaccination
- Ask for your cat's medical history and your vet's details
- Ask you to sign a consent form in case your cat requires medication or veterinary care
- Ensure the cattery is meticulously clean and well maintained
- Ask for a phone number for you or a contact person

If your cat is already on medication, check with the cattery to ensure they are prepared to administer it. Label the medicine carefully. If your cat requires a special diet, discuss this too.

### Vaccination

All catteries will require your cat to be vaccinated against cat flu and feline infectious enteritis. Vaccinations should be boosted annually and this should be done at least seven days before the cat is to be boarded.

### What to pack for your cat

The cattery may ask you to bring some bedding for your cat. This will help it to settle in as it has the reassuring smell of home. Some catteries prefer to provide their own bedding but may permit a small blanket or item of clothing with which your cat is familiar. If this is the case don't wash it beforehand – it will lose its reassuring smell. A favourite toy is also useful or even the cat's scratchpost.

### Transporting your cat

Do not carry your cat in your arms to the cattery. Until it is safely inside the cattery the responsibility for its safety is entirely yours.

### Book early

We strongly recommend you book early because a good cattery will be quickly filled.

## Check list

Checking the points below may help you in your choice of cattery.

|  | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| If also a kennel, do dogs disturb the cats?            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are surroundings neat and tidy?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a kitchen area to prepare food for cats?      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Were you made welcome?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you seen the cattery's licence?                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the cats have individual sleeping accommodation? *  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the cats have individual runs? *                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a shelf for cats to sit/lie on?               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a gap or full-height barrier between units? * | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there an interesting view for the cats?             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a safety passage? *                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the cat units have the cats' names on?              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the units clean? *                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there any smell?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the litter trays and bowls look clean?              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there heating for each cat? *                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you been asked about vaccination? *               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you been asked about your cat's diet?             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you been asked about your cat's health?           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the proprietor seem caring?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

\* key issues for you to look out for

[www.fabcats.org](http://www.fabcats.org)

## FAB's full range of Cat Friendly Practice leaflets

*Bringing your cat to the vet*  
*Giving medicine to your cat*  
*Feeding a poorly cat*  
*Your cat is having an operation*  
*Preventing health problems*  
*Insuring your cat*  
*Choosing a boarding cattery*  
*Common household poisons and cats*  
*Why do cats..?*

For more information on cat care  
[www.fabcats.org](http://www.fabcats.org)

### The Feline Advisory Bureau (FAB)

Set up almost 50 years ago, FAB's work now provides essential information for cat owners and expert information for people working with cats such as veterinary surgeons, breeders, cattery owners and rescue centres. Through our feline expert panel (a group of veterinary surgeons funded by FAB to specialise in feline care at UK veterinary universities) FAB has gathered a wealth of information on both common and rare conditions.

We're not just interested in veterinary treatment; our experts understand that a cat's home environment and lifestyle can have a huge influence on its health and well being. FAB is interested in the whole cat! The more owners understand cats and their behaviour the better they will be at spotting problems and giving TLC when a cat needs it most.

For over 400 pages of information on cat care go to FAB's website. We're already helping over 1 million cat owners a year.

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 Tisbury, Wiltshire  
 SP3 6LD  
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 F 01747 871 873  
 E [information@fabcats.org](mailto:information@fabcats.org)

Registered Charity No. 254641



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from the Feline Advisory Bureau



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direct line

