

What to Do When You Find Newborn Kittens Outside

If you happen upon a litter of tiny kittens outdoors, it's natural to want to scoop them up and try to care for them yourself or take them to a shelter – *but both of those options may actually place them in more danger.*

To give newborn kittens the best chance of survival, follow these steps:

1. Leave the kittens alone and try to figure out if their mom is still around. Observe them from a distance every couple of hours, for 12 to 18 hours. If the kittens seem content and are not fussing, there's a good chance their mom is coming back.
2. If the kittens are in danger due to their location, move them to a safer spot nearby so the mom can easily find them when she returns.
3. If the kittens are dirty, meowing, or appear sick, underweight or dehydrated, contact a local rescue organization. They can help you determine if the kittens are at risk and if you should intervene.
4. If you spot the mom, leave the kittens alone. When the kittens start eating on their own, contact a local rescue organization, a trap-neuter-return (TNR), or a community cat program to talk about intake of the kittens & spay services for the mother cat so that she can be released back to the location she was found.