

Integrating a cat into your home from a shelter.



AniMeals
"Feeding Hungry Animals"

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Bringing the Cat Home

- ◆ The most important thing you must remember is the very first 24 hours for your new friend are the most special and critical.



- ◆ It is common for cats, regardless of whether they come from homes or streets, to hide in a new territory.
- ◆ Very sensitive or under-socialized cats often hide for a week or more!
- ◆ Do not reach for the cat! Let the cat come to you. If he doesn't approach, come back in fifteen minutes.
- ◆ Do not be surprised if he doesn't eat. It is common for re-homed cats to show no interest in eating, often for several days. Pick up the leftovers and leave. Come back in a couple hours with a fresh meal of the same high-quality food.
- ◆ Cats are territorial. Do him a favor and provide a small area to call his own for the first few days or weeks.

Bringing the Cat Home Continued

- ◆ Furnish the room with cat amenities, such as food, water and a litter box. You'll want to spend time with your cat, so make sure there's a comfortable place for you to sit as well.
- ◆ Find out what type of cat litter the shelter or previous owner used. If a cat doesn't like the kind of litter you have it could resort to not using the new box. If there are additional cats, make sure there is a cat box for each of them - a cat box is a perfect reason to be territorial.
- ◆ Cats love to get away from it all in small places, and you can provide one for your new cat as his own little safe haven. If he came home in a cat carrier, that might be a good choice.
- ◆ If there are other human family members, go over the ground rules about your new pet. Remind them not to startle him and to keep the door to his room shut.
- ◆ It is very important that if you intend your cat to be an indoor/outdoor cat that you make sure he has established your house as its residence. This means keep your new cat indoors for a minimum of two weeks before allowing to explore outside.



Introducing Two Cats

- ◆ Change is difficult for cats, so the introduction needs to move slowly. As soon as the new cat is brought into the house, set up a “guest room” for her in a quiet spare room, complete with food, water, comfy bed, litter box and toys.
- ◆ After releasing your new cat into the temporary living quarters, remove the carrier and leave it out for the existing cat to investigate. Filled with new cat scent, the carrier serves as a subtle introduction to the newcomer. Don't linger. Bring the carrier out and continue with your normal “just got home” routine.
- ◆ Switch sleeping blankets between the new and current cat so they have a chance to become accustomed to each other's scent. You could also put under the food bowls to introduce the scent for sharing with the other cat.
- ◆ Once or twice, switch roles. Put the new cat in the normal living quarters, and let the current cat sniff out the new cats safe room.
- ◆ Dote on the current cat so it doesn't think it's losing it's primary status with you.

Introducing Two Cats Continued

- ◆ If things are proceeding well; both cats are eating normal and appear playfully curious about each other, leave the door ajar and allow the introduction to take place knowing it is up to the two cats to take the next step.
- ◆ It is a good idea to feed both cats before the introduction.
- ◆ Beware that a little hissing, swatting and chasing is expected - only intervene if World War III erupts.
- ◆ The period of adjustment and creation of a new routine can stretch beyond 6 to 12 weeks - patience is key with cats.
- ◆ You may want to keep the cats separate while you are gone until you know for certain that they are getting along.
- ◆ You will need to add another cat box and scoop more frequently. If the new cat doesn't like the litter it may go elsewhere and then your current cat will make sure that it gets covered by their scent. So make sure both are doing well with the cat litter, etc. to prevent any additional messes.
- ◆ Keep in mind that cats are very routine - oriented; they like things done the same way, at the same time, every day. It will take time for both cats to get acquainted with the new schedule.



Things to Consider Before Bringing a Cat to Your Home from a Shelter...

- ◆ These animals have been emotionally traumatized by other humans in one way or the other, trust does not come easy.
- ◆ If you have pets at home, consider their emotional needs. How will this impact the time you spend with them? Do you have the time to spend with both?
- ◆ Adopting an animal is not a spur of the moment decision to make. Please think it through! Are you truly able to be the savior that these cats need? It is traumatizing to be sent back to the shelter, make sure it's a done deal!
- ◆ Cats are very emotional animals. They go through a period of adjustment that can last from a couple days to several months. Do you have the patience to make it work?
- ◆ If you have roommates or significant others, are they on board with another animal?
- ◆ Does anyone in your home have allergies? This is a highly common reason for animals being sent to the shelter!