



Cats and Children

If there are children in your household, it is important to teach them how to handle and act with your new cat to avoid stressing the cat and causing potential injury to the children. Children learn responsibility by good examples, so guide your children and regularly monitor the care being provided for your pets.

Here are some guidelines to help your children and your new cat live happily together:

- Instruct children to be calm, quiet and slow-moving when being introduced to the cat.
- A kitten or cat should be picked up and held with one hand under its chest and the other supporting its hindquarters.
- Handle the new cat gently and tell children not to squeeze him too tightly. Most children under five years old cannot hold a cat properly. Young children should be taught to sit calmly while you place the cat in their lap. This way everyone is safe and happy.
- Children should leave the cat alone when he is sleeping, eating and using the litter box. Also, instruct youngsters not to put the cat in inappropriate places like the dryer, on the top bunk, in a closed box, etc.
- Cats should never be dragged out of hiding against their will.
- Children should not chase the cat around the house. If cornered and frightened, the cat may scratch and bite or may become timid.
- Never leave young children alone with a new pet.
- Teach children appropriate play and petting. Provide safe, interactive toys for the cat and limit access to dangerous items, such as string.
- Teach children to look for signals that show their pet is getting irritated or over-stimulated. A swishing tail, ears back and/or gentle nips can lead to being scratched or bitten. Respect obvious cues, such as hissing and growling.
- Always allow the cat to escape, if he tries to run.
- Never allow rough handling as this teaches the cat that it is okay to be rough back.

Strengthening the Bond Between Pets and People

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