



Introducing a New Cat To Other Animals

Before introducing your new cat to your other pets, make sure your existing pets are current with their vaccinations. Introducing your cat to other pets should be done slowly. Prepare a safe room (like a bathroom) where your new cat can reside for awhile before being introduced to the other pets.

REMEMBER—it may take a month or more for the new cat to be accepted.

Cat to Cat

- It is a good idea to wait two weeks to make sure your new cat is healthy before introducing him to other cats. Then take these steps:
- If your new cat is showing signs of illness, please do not introduce it to your existing cat until you consult with your veterinarian.
- Spend time with your new cat out of sight of your existing cat. And be sure to lavish attention on your existing cat.
- Allow your original cat to follow his usual routine. He will be aware that something is different and seek out the newcomer. Allow them to sniff under the door.
- After a few days or so, place the new cat inside his carrier in his safe room and allow your existing cat to investigate the room. It is normal for cats to hiss and growl at each other upon their first meeting; however, an all-out physical attack is very rare. Keep a towel handy to throw on the cats in order to separate them.
- After several comfortable introductions without hissing or growling through a carrier or screen, allow the cats to interact one-on-one. Have a cup of water or towel handy to throw on the cats in case a fight breaks out. Only allow short periods of contact, increasing as time goes on.
- Now, allow the new cat to begin to explore outside of his safe room. Slowly increase the area and time the new kitty can explore outside his safe room as he becomes comfortable.
- Once the new cat has been allowed access to the rest of the house, leave his safe room intact for a couple of weeks so he may take refuge there. The cats' positive attitudes toward each other should begin in a week or so. Do not be discouraged if it takes longer. The length of adjustment will depend on the personality of the cats and how long your existing cat was a solitary pet.
- Be sure to lavish attention on all your cats to make everyone feel as part of the family.
- If all goes well, you may find the cats sleeping together and playing joyfully. Social interaction levels vary; you may have cats that just tolerate the existence of each other, and that is okay, too!

Cat to Dog

- First, prepare a safe room for your new cat. Make sure the dog does not have access to the cat's food and water, and the litter box. You can use a baby gate to block the dog's access until the two are comfortable with each other. (over)

Strengthening the Bond Between Pets and People

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- When introducing your new cat to a dog, put the cat in a carrier on a raised surface like a table or dresser. This will help the cat feel less threatened. Keep your dog on a leash. Allow them to sniff each other (try to keep the leash loose) and then distract the dog with a treat or praise. It is normal for the cat to hiss and growl at first, especially if he has not lived with a dog before. Cats take time to adjust to changes and the more the animals are together in the same room, with you to supervise, the quicker they will adjust. *Remember to use lots of positive reinforcement.*
- After several comfortable introductions through the carrier, open the carrier door and allow the cat to come out on her own. *Remember to keep your dog on a loose leash.*
- Arm yourself with a squirt bottle and spray them with water if they start to fight. You can also throw a towel over the cat if she attacks the dog. Make sure the cat has an escape route or can leap to a high place. Do not let the dog chase or corner the cat or vice versa.
- Separate them when you are not there to supervise, until you are comfortable with the situation.
- With a flat collar on the dog, you can let him drag the leash around the house so you can grab, if necessary. Some dogs are too predatory to adjust to a cat. Proceed with care and, if this is the case, please do not leave them together unsupervised.
- If your cat hides, do not worry. Keep the dog around as much as possible so the cat can get used to his presence. Make sure the cat has a private place, not accessible to the dog, where he can eat and drink in peace and feel safe. Ensure that the cat has unthreatened access to his litter box. Again, baby gates work well for this purpose.
- Allow the pets to adjust in their own time. Be patient, and act calm and relaxed. Often they become friends; sometimes they just tolerate each other. Either way, you should respect the arrangement.

Cat to Other Pets

Remember, cats are curious. Fish, rabbits, rodents, birds, etc. should be protected from the inquisitive cat. These animals are the natural prey of cats and may become very stressed around your new pet, especially if he is sitting on top of their house. Make sure cages are secure and well maintained. Rabbits can often be great friends of cats—best choice, if another type of animal is desired.