

INTRODUCING: New Cat to Your Cat at Home, or A New Dog to Your Cat or Dog at Home

This is a step-by-step program to safely introduce a new pet into a home with resident pets.

Rules:

1. Never ever bring one pet up to and into the space of the other pet.
2. Keep the pets separated when an adult is not able to supervise their interactions.
Separated means keeping the pets in separate rooms with a door that can be closed.
3. Keep your dog on leash for several weeks anytime the cat is in the same room.
4. Remember, even though your pet may have lived previously with another dog or cat, they do not know this new animal.

Introducing a New Cat/Kitten to the Resident Cat:

- Confine your new cat or kitten to one medium-sized room with its litter box, food, water and a bed.
- Feed your resident cat and the newcomer cat on each side of the door to this room. This will help all of them to associate something enjoyable (eating!) with each other's smells. Start this in small steps. Don't put the food so close to the door that the animals are too upset by each other's presence to eat. Gradually move the dishes closer to the door until your pets can eat calmly, directly on either side of the door.
- Next, use a children's gate to allow the animals to see each other, and repeat the whole process of feeding. Remember to start at a distance and slowly decrease the distance. . You might do this a few weeks or even months we always work at the animals pace.
- Swap Scents: Switch sleeping blankets or beds between your resident cat and your new cat so they have a chance to become accustomed to each other's scent. Rub a towel on one animal and put it underneath the food dish of another animal. You should do this with each animal in the house. We must make your cat understand that the new cat is OK, and to do this we must pair something your cat wants whenever the new cat is present.
- Trading Places: After several days allow the new cat to explore your home, while your resident cat is confined to the room the new cats has been staying in. This is an excellent way to allow them to become familiar with each other's scent.

Introducing Your Cat to New Dog or Your Dog to a New Cat

- *If this is a new cat coming into a home with a dog begin by confining your new cat or kitten to one medium-sized room with its litter box, food, water and a bed.*

Using a Children's Gate:

- Use a children's gate to allow the cat to jump over, to create distance from the dog.
- Initially restrict which areas in the house the dog is allowed.
- Use a children's gate to allow the animals to see each other when feeding.
Start at a distance and slowly decrease the distance the bowls are placed. . You might do this a few weeks or even months. It is important to work at the animals pace.

Swapping Scents:

- Switch sleeping blankets or beds between the cat and the dog so they have a chance to become accustomed to each other's scent. Rub a towel on one animal and put it underneath the food dish of another animal. You should do this with each animal in the house. We must make your pet understands that the new pet is OK, and to do this we must pair something your pet wants whenever the new pet is present.

Using Sit, Down & Stay

- If the dog doesn't already know the skills of "sit," "down," and "stay," you should begin working on them. Start your training in a separate area first - until your dog has a good knowledge of the skills. Small pieces of food will increase your dog's motivation to perform, which will be necessary in the presence of such a strong distraction as a new cat. Even if your dog already knows these cues, work to get it eagerly responding because you have great reinforcers (treats, toys). Boil some chicken or use some scraps of meat or meaty baby food and let your dog get a quick lick from the jar. To override a distraction you need something really yummy. Have your dog on leash and reinforce it for being quiet and calm. Do this whenever you want to let the cat loose in the house. Remember to reinforce the cat too, so it will feel that the dog is OK!

Controlled Meeting:

- After your cat and dog have become comfortable eating on opposite sides of the door, and have been exposed to each other's scents as described above, you can attempt a face-to-face introduction in a controlled manner.
 - Clip on your dog's leash, and using treats have your dog either sit or down-stay. Have another family member bring in the cat into the room holding it and giving it something good to eat (cats love canned chicken or tuna).
 - IMPORTANT -*While the cat is in the room you should be busy keeping your dog's attention towards you and not letting your dog stare at the cat.*
 - At first, the cat and the dog should be on opposite sides of the room. Lots of short visits are better than a few long visits. Two or three minutes the first

time is plenty, and you should end on a good note! Have the other person take the cat and put it back into its room. (Remove the dog first then the cat)

- Now take the dog outside and play for 5 minutes!
- Don't drag out the visit so long that the dog becomes uncontrollable.
- Repeat this step several times until both the cat and dog are tolerating each other's presence without fear, aggression, or other undesirable behaviors.
- This could take a few weeks or months depending on the dog and cat in your households.

Never leave them together alone unless you are sure they will be OK.

Let Your Cat Go:

- Next, allow your cat freedom to explore at its own pace, keeping your dog on lead and again keeping your dog busy by watching you and ignoring the cat. The dog is still on-leash and is in a "down-stay." Give your dog treats and praise for its calm behavior. If your dog gets up from its "stay" position, it should be repositioned with a treat lure, and praised and rewarded for obeying the "stay" command. If your cat runs away or becomes aggressive, you're progressing too fast. Go back to the previous introduction steps. This might take several weeks to months, but it can be done with great end results!