

INTRODUCING YOUR NEW CAT TO YOUR HOME



**Aurora
Animal
Shelter**

As you bring your new family member home, it is very important to go slow. Patience is key as your new cat is introduced to new environment, animals or people. Every cat is different and will have different needs as they adjust to their new home. Being understanding and giving them time and space to adjust is imperative in order to create and maintain healthy, strong relationships.

STEP 1: Isolate your new cat to a confined space or room in your home. Ideally, this will be a quiet space in the home, with less noise and traffic. A busy or noisy area of the home could create a stressful environment for the cat and will be a tough first impression! Ideal examples would be a spare bedroom or bathroom, but even an extra-large dog kennel or enclosure can work as well! In this enclosure, your cat will need everything to make it feel cozy and comfortable. This includes food, water, (at least one) litter box, toys and a bed or resting area in their new space. A hiding spot, such as a cardboard box, can be helpful as well. Be sure to go into the room and spend time with them a few times throughout each day. This may be as simple as going into the room and sitting near them or reading/talking to them. Do not force interactions such as cuddling, petting, picking up or holding. Some cats may solicit attention right away, while others may need to get more comfortable with their environment first. Treats and toys are great motivators for interacting with them and/or making them feel more comfortable. It is recommended that your cat remains in their confined space for at least one week to adjust properly. Remember every cat is different and will settle in at their own pace!

STEP 2: Once your cat is comfortable and acclimated in their confined space, you can introduce it to the rest of the house. Ensure you keep the door of their confined space open while they explore the new territory. This will provide them with a “safe space” to retreat to if they feel the need to do so.

STEP 3: Introduce your cat to other animals in the home. Baby gates and temporary barriers are great tools for providing safe interactions and greetings between other animals. Treats and toys are great tools to use during this integration process. Monitoring and limiting all interactions for

at least the first week is vital to the success of their relationship. Be sure to not to push it too far! You should not expect that your pets will be best friends immediately. It will take time for them to adjust to one another being in the same home. Don't fret if their first introductions are not ideal.

STEP 4: Giving your new cat free-range of the home. Once your cat is comfortable and acclimated to the new environment, other animals and people, they are ready to have free roam. Be sure to keep a “safe space” available to them if they need it at any point in time.

REMEMBER:

- Each cat is different in regard to how long it will take them to acclimate to a new environment. Be patient with them and be sure you are not exposing them to too much too quickly.
- You should provide one litter box per cat in your home, plus an extra (per cat). Having a litter box shortage in your home can result in inappropriate elimination problems.
- Be sure each cat in your home has their own safe hiding place so they can get away if they need to and so they feel more comfortable. Do not actively remove them from their hiding space unless necessary. They will come out to eat, drink and use the litter box on their own. Be mindful that they do not have access to unsafe hiding spaces (such as behind appliances).
- Do not let the cat into the outdoors. Your cat is adjusting to a lot, being outside it could easily get spooked or get lost.

