



Transitioning your new cat to your home

When you get home!

Step 1:

Start by setting up the new cat in a separate room for several days along with the supplies set up beforehand,

Food (most shelters provide a starter bag of food, however if you intend to change your cats food, please do so slowly over a weeks time)

Food/Water dishes

Uncovered Litter Box/Litter

Feliway (cat pheromone that assists with stress and behaviors)

Cat Beds/Hidey Spot/Cube/Kennel (it is also good to bring at least one piece of bedding from the shelter to assist with transition, having their own smell alleviates stress)

Comfort Companion (stuffed animal that can be a "buddy" to snuggle up with)

Cat Trees/Perches

Music (Through a Cat's Ear is highly recommended)

Enrichment Toys

Scratching Posts

Cat DVD's

Step 2:

Depending on the progress of transition of the new cat this step can happen after a few days or up to at least 14 days. How much time depends on the interactions happening. It is imperative to be patient through this process.

Once they feel comfortable then you can move onto the next phase which would be having a gate or a screen door so that the new cat can see out, the resident cat can see in, but they cannot physically get to one another.

The cats should be able to see each other and smell each other. We encourage having them eat their canned food together by the door (or any other high quality treat) and learn to be around each other without getting into each others' space yet.

You will also want to swap out bedding for scent sharing. Leaving the new cats bedding around for the resident cat to smell will help him/her to acclimate to the new cat and vice versa.

Once the gate is up or screen door is in, then monitor their interactions by the door.

We also encourage to have play time with them. If you have more than one person to assist, have one with the new cat and one with the resident cat. If not you can set up play stations on both sides of the door. Play with the laser light, feather toys etc. All associations should be positive and make them both feeling good about each other.

Step 3

After the new cat and the resident cat start to get to see each other and there is no negative interactions occurring (hissing, growling etc.) the next step is to let the new cat wander around the home while the resident cat checks out the new cats pad without them interacting with each other yet.

This can be done for a few days, gauging their behaviors is the best way to assess the time frame needed.

Step 4 (Step 3 didn't work what do we do?)

We would recommend starting from the beginning again by having the new cat set up in a separate quiet spot again with the door closed. Depending on how many days the first intro was, we recommend adding on at least a day or two so the cats can have a break and get their grounding.

If after a few days you see that they are comfortable with each other by the door, then you can swap out the rooms. Let the resident cat in the new cats pad, and let the new cat wander. Do that for a few days too. Then if all goes well, then it is time to allow them to interact past the gate/screen. Following steps 2 & 3.

It takes time and patience and each time I am so amazed by the transitions that happen.

When introductions are done correctly the majority of the time the cats will get along. Also introductions can also be reset and done over. When done at a great pace that suits your cats personalities, success will happen.