

9 WAYS TO WELCOME HOME YOUR NEW CAT

Congratulations! You have just begun a relationship that's bound to be filled with fun and affection. By starting off on the right foot, you can cut short that rocky adjustment period most new relationships go through.

- Go slowly at first. A new cat may need seven to fourteen days to relax into her new environment. Save meet-and-greets with friends, neighbors, and relatives until the cat is eating and eliminating on a normal schedule.
- Offer your cat a safe place to hide while they get their bearings. They'll appreciate the chance to observe their new family's routine from a small, dark space or one high above the action.
- Bring your new feline to a caring veterinarian for a wellness exam within one week after adoption.
- Provide the same diet they had at the shelter at least for the first week or two. If you wish to switch to a different flavor or brand, slowly make the switch over 1 to 2 weeks, starting with a quarter ration of the new food mixed into the old favorite. From there, up the ratio of new to old about 10% each day.
- Set up the little box in a quiet, low traffic area. Unsure of what litter to use? The majority of cats prefer fine grain clumping litter. Try that first unless the new adoptee is so young that she is in the letter-eating stage. Non-clumping letter is recommended for kittens under 10 weeks of age.
- Cats must scratch, so make sure to provide yours with a sturdy, rough-textured scratching post to save wear and tear on furniture. Cat manicures every ten to fourteen days also help reduce damage.
- Cat-proof your home before giving your new feline runs of the house. Put away harsh cleaning products, human medications and household poisons. Re-home any poisonous houseplants. And if the newcomer is a kitten, lock away any breakables and remember to keep the toilet lid down.
- Once settled in, a young cat or kitten will be eager to play. Stock up on interactive toys such as feather wands and kitty fishing poles to engage attention and direct energies toward a positive pursuit.
- Ready a comfortable cat perch on a sunny window sill - if it overlooks the birdfeeder, all the better! Observing live birds and squirrels beats out kitty videos any day.