

CATS AND KITTENS: Introducing Your New Cat



You've just adopted a fluffy Maine Coon, and you're really excited to take him home and introduce him to your other pets, friends and family. While this is surely an exciting time for your family, introductions can be stressful if not done properly.

1. Isolation is the first step to making things go smoothly. It is ideal to isolate the newcomer – place your cat in a room he will have all to himself. This could be a spare bedroom or bathroom, but ideally he should be able to use this room as his own private sanctuary while he adapts to the new environment. You will need to provide him with his own food, water, litter box, toys, and bed. Spend time with him often in his sanctuary room, but do not force him to interact with you unless he is feeling up to it. Using treats and interactive toys will be beneficial during this time.
2. Once he has adjusted to the sanctuary room, you can introduce him to the rest of the house. This could take a couple of weeks or even longer, so patience is key. Briefly confine your other animals and open the sanctuary room so your new cat can explore the home without being bombarded by curious sniffs from the dog or other cats. Keep the sanctuary room open so your cat can go back to safety anytime he feels necessary.
3. Only after your new cat has shown he is adjusting well can you begin introducing other animals. Using scented items your other cat lies on is a great way to start this process. You can also use a towel to rub your new kitty and allow your other animals to sniff it. A cracked door or a baby gate can help

without giving them full access to each other yet. Treats and interactive play sessions can be beneficial during this process. If your dog reacts appropriately to seeing your new cat, praise him and give him a treat. This goes the same for other cats in the house. You want your animals to begin to associate each other with positive things – food and toys! Make sure you are monitoring your animals during this process and ending sessions if they have negative interactions.

4. When your animals are able to be near each other with toys and food present, you can let them interact without a baby gate or other barrier. Make sure you are rewarding them for positive behavior!

Taking your time during the introductory process can set everyone up for success in creating a harmonious household.

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hsppr.org/resources



Humane Society
Pikes Peak Region

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