

9 Lives Orphanage

Adoption pack!



Lives
Orphanage



Congratulations on adopting your new family member!

Here are a few things that you will need to know:

When you get your new family member home, please set up a safe space for them in one small room to start off with. The temperament of your cat or kitten, will determine how soon you can let them explore the house. Keep them in their safe space for as long as it takes for them to settle in. Kmart play pens are also good if you have adopted a shy cat or kitten. They most likely have been kept in a small space with the foster so too much space too soon can cause them to become upset. PLEASE KEEP YOUR CAT OR KITTEN INSIDE FOR A MINIMUM OF 4 WEEKS! Depending on temperament again, this will determine how quickly they can be let outside. If your cat or kitten is very confident then they will most likely be fine to be let outside after 4 weeks for short periods of time. If they are very shy, then more time inside is recommended.

Stitches:

If you have adopted a female cat or kitten, they may still have stitches. These need to be removed by a vet nurse 10-14 days after she has been desexed. Please keep an eye on her stitches. Make sure she doesn't chew or bite at them as they may become infected. Keep an eye out for any redness or swelling in the area. This may feel hot to the touch. A lump around the incision is normal, it is just a reaction to the internal stitches. This may take a few weeks to reduce in size.

Vaccinations:

Your adoption fee only covers the first vaccination; therefore you will need to get a booster shot. Usually this is about 3 weeks after the first vaccination. The date for this will be in your vet book which you will have received from the foster. They will then need just one vaccination yearly.

Adult cats we usually don't vaccinate.

Food:

As a rescue we rely solely on donations from the public so generally our cats and kittens are fed what we get donated. We ask for Chef Kitten Loaf for our babies and either Royal Canin, Purina or Whiskas Kitten Biscuits. Your foster will be able to tell you what food your new family member has been eating so you can get the same food.

Don't change their food too quickly as they will get an upset stomach.

Pet Insurance:

You should have filled out a 30 day free insurance form. This is something that Pet N Sur has asked us to provide with every adoption we do. This provides some security for you in the first 30 days if you have an injury or sickness. If you need to make a claim, you will need to contact Pet N Sur direct. We do not get given any policy numbers.

Checklist:

- **Carrier**-you will need a good carrier to take your cat or kitten home and for future vet visits
- **Litter tray, litter and scoop**-essential during their time inside
- **Food and bowls**-it is important for your new family member to have their own bowls away from other family pets
- **Flea and worm treatments**-depending on the brand, flea and worm treat every month
- **Bed**-a nice snuggly bed they can call their own
- **Scratching post**-these are good to discourage scratching furniture or other things you don't want scratched
- **Treats**-treats are great as a reward for good behaviour and training.

Please join our 9 Lives Adoptive Pawrents facebook page! All our fosters love to see updates of the cats and kittens grow.

SETTLING IN A TIMID CAT / KITTEN

Things to do

1. Set him/her up in a quiet room. A bedroom is ideal. Consider plugging in a Feliway diffuser (a calming pheromone which will help make the cat feel at home quicker). Set up a comfy cat bed on top of the regular bed or on a chair/couch.
2. Interactions should be in a quiet voice and in a quiet manner, ideally one person at a time. Stay low to the ground (kneeling on the floor is best). Use a soft eye gaze and avoid staring. Try doing a "slow blink" when the kitten is looking at you as this is a natural cat behaviour which shows them that you are not a threat.
3. Offer special treats, toss them from a distance one at a time if the kitten won't come close to you. Eventually, try hand feeding.
 - Try Whiskas temptations, cheese, fresh or cooked meat/fish
4. Feed wet food twice daily. Place the bowl as close to you as the kitten is comfortable with. Sit on the floor quietly while the kitten eats. Eventually, try hand feeding. Some kittens will let you pat them while they are eating. Others worry about being distracted while you touch them.
5. Play with your kitten. A dangling toy on a string is generally best as it allows interaction from a distance and encourages the kittens hunting instincts to chase. Several pet shops sell some excellent realistic bird and mouse toys. Many cats/kittens are most playful in the evenings.
6. Offer but don't force a pat by gently reaching your hand towards the kitten while rubbing your fingers together and calling softly. See if the kitten will smooch up to your hand. Try rubbing the cheeks and chin rather than reaching over the top of the kittens face. Initially, don't pat down the whole body unless the kitten is enjoying it. But if so, some cats like to be scratched at the base of the tail.
7. Once the kitten is trusting you enough and allowing pats regularly, you can encourage him/her to become comfortable sitting on your lap by gently picking up from underneath the chest using both hands, but only while the kitten is purring and facing away from you and with you positioned on the floor. Lift for a brief second initially, gradually working your way up to a brief moment on your lap. Place a soft blanket over your lap to make it more comfortable. Keep patting and rubbing the cheeks during this entire interaction.
8. Once the kitten is comfortable in the bedroom, try leaving the door open when you are out so he/she can explore the rest of the house without getting any frights. Eventually, try leaving the door open while you are home. The rest of the house will be more appealing if you place toys around and encourage the kitten to chase a toy out of the room into the rest of the house.

9. For vet visits that may be coming up, leave a side opening travel cage (medium to large is best) permanently in the kittens room. Leave the cage door open and place a soft blanket inside. Throw treats in the cage daily. Try also placing a bowl of wet food inside the cage and allow the kitten to eat in the cage while you are present. Eventually, on the day of the vet visit, you will only to quietly shut the door after the kitten has gone in. This will prevent the kitten losing trust in you while you are trying to build a relationship. The cage will also be a familiar space for the kitten and will feel safer during travel. Ensure to continue the positive reinforcement with the cage between vet visits. Plan ahead and build up the positive associations with the cage at least 1 week before every vet visit.

What not to do

1. Do not drag the kitten out from its hiding place in order to force interactions. Be patient.
2. Do not make sudden movements or loud noises when interacting with the kitten. Avoid staring at the kitten. Avoid standing in the room, which makes you look bigger and more intimidating.
3. Avoid reaching down and forward over the top of the kittens head/face.
4. Do not pick up the kitten up at all until you have built a trusting relationship with him.
5. Do not try to place a harness or try anything foreign or new with the kitten until you have developed a trusting relationship with him/her.
6. Do not release into the main house right away. The kitten must have a room where it always feels safe and secure before exploring the rest of the house.
7. Do not introduce to the entire family at once.
8. Do not introduce to other pets until the kitten is comfortable with its environment.

Thank you for adopting a timid kitten from us. These kittens have often had the roughest starts and people like you make it possible for them to have the secure and loving home they deserve. With patience and time, the relationship you will develop with your rescue kitty will be one of the most rewarding. However, if you feel you are not making progress, please give us a call to discuss. Often times, a previous foster parent will have ideas or insights for your particular kitten.



INTRODUCING YOUR NEW CAT OR KITTEN TO YOUR EXISTING CAT

Introducing your new cat to your existing cat may seem daunting but done thoughtfully and with patience, it can be achieved!

Cats are territorial animals and need to be **introduced** to other animals **very slowly**. They need time in order to get used to each other's scent before a face-to-face meeting. Slow introductions also help prevent fear and aggression problems from developing.

- 🐱 Allow your new cat to become accustomed to their own safe space before introducing them to the rest of the house and any other animals. This safe space will need to be kept separate from your original cat. Their own litter box, food and water supply and scratching post are vital to giving your new cat their own territory without taking away from your existing cat.
- 🐱 Feed them on opposite sides of the door and reward them for any calm behaviour with a favourite treat or toy.
- 🐱 Brush them with the same brush and allow each cat to sniff the brush – a great tool in integrating their scents. You can also use socks to pet your cat; try and get them to kiss the sock as cats' have pheromones in their cheeks, allowing the new cat to smell this and rewarding her (and vice versa) is a great tool.
- 🐱 Before allowing your new cat to explore, purchase a mesh barrier from a hardware store – or any barrier that will keep the new cat in while keeping the existing cat out yet allows them to see and sniff each other; again feed them (on opposite sides of the door) and reward with their favourite food and toys.
- 🐱 Once your animals appear comfortable with that, slowly allow the new cat or kitten to have access to other areas of the home.
- 🐱 Use a toy such as the "Flying Bird Toy" to play with them together – if they are able to play together and eventually eat next to each other, you're know you're on the right track.

Please be aware, though we do have some experience introducing new cats and kittens to other cats, we are not trained behaviourists. Be sure to read the below resources for a higher chance of successful introduction. If you are at all concerned please contact your local veterinarian for advice.

Sources and Useful Websites:

<http://bestfriends.org/resources/introducing-new-cat>
<https://www.petfinder.com/cats/bringing-a-cat-home/cat-to-cat-introductions/>
<http://www.catbehaviorassociates.com/how-to-introduce-a-second-cat/>
<http://blog.spiritessences.com/mojos-mailbag/2015/7/14/cat-to-cat-introductions>
http://www.fourpaws.org/pages/adopting_pages/introducing_cats.html



INTRODUCING YOUR NEW CAT OR KITTEN TO YOUR DOG

Introducing your new cat to your dog may seem daunting but done thoughtfully and with patience, it can be achieved!

Cats are territorial and need to be introduced to other animals very slowly. They need time in order to get used to each other's scent before a face-to-face meeting. Slow introductions also help prevent fear and aggression problems from developing.

Three key things to remember when introducing your new cat to your dog are:

PATIENCE - POSITIVITY - PRAISE

Patience - Allow your cat to become accustomed to their own **safe space** before introducing them to the rest of the house and any other animals. Put up a barrier that will keep the dog out and keep the cat in yet preferably one they can see each other through (e.g. modified baby gate or mesh barrier from hardware store) Get your dog to sit on the other side and praise and reward them for any calm and quiet behaviour. Allow them to sniff each other through the gate, and continue to praise and reward. Once your animals are comfortable with that bring out your cat and allow the dog to approach (on leash!) and sniff, rewarding them for any calm behaviour. Keep these meetings short but frequent, and with time (and patience!) you will be able to extend these meetings and have animals that have learnt to enjoy each other's presence.

Positivity – Never allow your dog to be in a position of making a mistake; if they are meeting face to face your dog must be on a leash, if they are calm/quiet upon meeting reward them with a quick walk around the block - great to help them release all that excitable energy! You want your dog to think that all good things happen when the cat is around. If they stay on a sit outside the barrier, treat, praise and play with them. Whatever motivates your dog the most, reward them with that. If they are too excitable, just have them walk past the gate at first and build onto it.

Praise – It cannot be stressed enough, you want to build a positive relationship between your cat and your dog, which means your dog needs to think all good things happen when the cat is around! If they look at the new cat and don't bark, reward; if they sit in front of the barrier quietly, reward; if they look at the cat then back at you, reward. If your dog barks, lunges, or is over excited, it is best to put them in time out for a minute rather than yell, smack or get frustrated. After taking them out of time out, put them on a sit in front of barrier again, praise, and reward. If they can't do that then go back a step and walk them past the barrier while praising, and build onto it.

Please be aware though we do have some experience introducing new cats and kittens to dogs, we are not trained behaviourists. If you are at all concerned please contact your local accredited positive trainer.



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INTRODUCING YOUR NEW CAT OR KITTEN TO YOUR DOG

TIPS & TIDBITS

- Your dog will need to be taught a reliable “leave it” cue. You can learn how to teach them here:
<https://positively.com/dog-behavior/basic-cues/leave-it/>
- **Catify** your home by creating high and covered (den) spaces for your cat to jump onto when feeling insecure. Think about the flow of your house; match up shelves - to bookcases - to a short leap to the coffee-table. By creating vertical spaces for your cat, you will make them feel much more secure and at peace.
- Think of your pets’ personalities and try to match them up. A playful dog should not be paired with an elderly or young cat; just as a dog with a tendency to chase should not be paired with a timid, run-and-hide scaredy cat.
- Brush your new cat and let your dog smell the brush and vice versa – a great way to introduce them to each other’s scent.
- Be sure to never leave your dog alone with your new cat.

CONSULTING A DOG TRAINER

If you have any problems or concerns with your dog’s behaviour towards your cat such as chasing, nipping, lunging or excessive barking, please get in touch with the 9 Lives Team, and your local force free dog trainer. Please do not use punitive home methods by using devices such as shock collars and anti-bark collars; they only create more behavioural issues as dogs think any shock around the cat, is because of the cat – thus making the issue worse. Through patience, and thoughtful preparation, dogs and cats can get along and (often, and do) become good friends.

Sources and useful websites:

<https://www.paws.org/library/cats/home-life/introducing-cat-to-dog/>

<http://www.americanhumane.org/animals/adoption-pet-care/dog-behavior/introducing-dogs-to-cats.html>

<http://www.adoptapet.com/blog/6-steps-to-introduce-a-new-cat-to-your-dog/>

<http://jacksongalaxy.com/2010/10/01/introducing-dogs-and-cats/>