

# Cat to Cat Introductions

- Patience is the key to success in pet introductions. Several short introductions 5-10 minutes after a few days of acclimation to the new home are best. Confine one or both cats and then swap spaces for a little while to get them used to each other's scents. If one cat is to be confined, it should be the new cat. Rubbing one cat with a towel and then rubbing the other with the same towel is another way to get them used to each other's scents. This needs to be done at a minimum once daily...one rub of the towel won't do it. Make sure that whatever space is used for confinement is comfortable and has all of the kitty's needs like litter, food, water, and even a soft bed or blanket to sleep on. It is probably not a great idea to confine the new cat to the resident cat's favorite territory. For example, if your resident cat spends all day in the spare bedroom or office try using a spare bathroom. NEVER leave pets alone with each other. Always supervise the interactions until you are sure they are getting along.
- Introductions are best done during meals or treat time so that there is a positive association with the newcomer. Use good treats to reward good behavior, but do not punish bad behavior. Growling and hissing are normal sounds to hear at first. It usually just means "back off, I need more space." However, if there are any signs of aggression such as chasing after, biting, or swatting, separate and try again. Be sure to spend quality time with the resident cat. There is a tendency to want to spend a lot of time with the new cat, but the old cat needs reassurance that he or she is not being replaced. If a fight should break out be very careful. Pet parents have been bitten or scratched while trying to separate fighting cats. Use a broom to get between them, or throw a towel or water over them. A wet floor is better than a trip to the emergency room for you, and a trip to the vet for the cats. After they have calmed down, examine them to be sure there are no bite wounds or severe scratches. Sometimes if cats are having a hard time adjusting, your vet may prescribe a medication or herbal remedy to calm them during this acclimation period. Also, a product called Feliway which is a spray with natural pheromones can have a calming influence on cats.
- Again, remember that patience is key. It may take weeks or even months for cats to acclimate to each other. Some cats will get along right from the start. However, most of us need to work at getting our feline friends comfortable with each other. Some cats may never like each other, but most will come to a state of peaceful coexistence if they are allowed to acclimate in their own time and in their own way.



# Cat to Dog Introductions

- The key to successful cat to dog introductions is to expose them to one another gradually under controlled conditions. You want to avoid creating situations where the cat runs away and the dog's prey-chase instinct is activated. If your dog has previously lived with a cat, and your cat has previously had good experiences with dogs, they may progress quickly to tolerating each other. However, If you have an adult dog who has never been socialized to cats, the introduction should be a very gradual process lasting up to 30 days. In either case, train your dog to sit and stay reliably before bringing your new cat home. This may give you somewhat greater control once the introductions have been made. Remember that these steps are progressive, so go on to the next step only when you feel your dog and cat have "mastered" the previous one.

**Day 1**, Confine your new cat to his or her own room at first. After a few hours, confine the dog in a fenced-in yard or basement or separate room, and allow the cat to explore the rest of the house. Then put the cat back in his or her own room, so the dog has an opportunity to become familiar with the cat's scent. Put a baby gate up but leave the door closed.

**Day 2**, Crack open the door to the cat's room a couple of inches to allow the dog to see and sniff the cat through the opening for about 30 seconds to 1 minute. Reward the dog for appropriate behavior. Repeat this step a couple more times throughout the day. Continue to give the cat the opportunity to explore the house when the dog is securely confined out of sight.

**Day 3** and subsequently, increase the "viewing intervals" by short increments until the dog can watch the cat quietly for a few minutes. Reward good behavior.

- Allow the dog to view the cat with the door completely open, with the baby gate still in place, for a few minutes at a time. If the dog is tolerating the cat, go into another room. Call the dog to you and play a game with him or her or give them lots of love. Then ignore both animals (but keep attuned to them!!) and engage in some other activity nearby. The dog will start to lose interest in the cat.
- Eventually work up to leaving the door to the cat's room open, with the baby gate still up, whenever you are home. Always close the door when you are not present! Some pet owners will always need to keep the dog and cat separated when they are not around to supervise, but others may find that after a couple months' probation, the dog and cat are okay together by themselves. It is far better to err on the side of caution to prevent possible tragedy. Even though your dog and cat are peacefully coexisting, make sure the cat's food bowl and litter box are out of the dog's reach. Keep the cat from approaching the dog when the dog is eating or chewing on a bone.

