



Congratulations! You Adopted a New Cat!

Now it's time to make sure your house is ready for your new feline companion. Even if you don't have any other pets, change is stressful! And stress lowers your new cat's immune system, so we really want this transition to be as stress-free as possible. Here are some suggestions to a successful transition home:

1. Set up one room for your new feline family member's transition period. Since cats feel safest in small space, set up one room in your house where your new cat can live during their transition period. Put their food, water, toys, and litter box in this room (don't put the litterbox right next to the food though!). The room should have some safe hiding places (such as a cardboard box) but should not have hiding places where you cannot reach the cat if you need to (like way under the bed or couch). A transition period could be anywhere from a few days to a few weeks depending on the individual cat. Bideawee recommends housing them in this small room for at least a week before opening up the rest of your home, as they adjust to you and their new home.

Take this time to Kitten Proof the rest of your home!

2. Consider buying a calming pheromone plug-in such as Feliway (available at most pet stores). These plug-ins use cat pheromones to indicate to cats that a space is safe and has proven to have a positive effect on over 80% of cats.

3. Get some kind of scratching post (or cat tree or hanging scratcher or cardboard scratcher). Cats scratch to stretch their backs, let off energy, mark their territory, and trim their claws. It's very important to have material available to them for scratching! You can also try a tempting catnip spray to help teach them where to scratch.

4. Understand it will take time for your new cat to get comfortable. Remember that every cat is different, and the transition period varies a great deal from cat to cat. It might take 2 - 8 weeks before your new cat is totally comfortable in your home, with you or other humans, and with your current pets. And that's totally fine!

Pro tip: Don't measure or judge your relationship with the cat during the first month.

5. Plan for slow introductions between pets. You want your animal companions to have positive interactions. These instructions allow you to control the narrative. Plus, a short quarantine period gives you a chance to make sure no one is getting sick due to stress - and sharing that with the other animals! Check out our handouts on safe cat-dog and cat-cat introductions. If you have another pet you'd like your cat to meet (like a ferret, rabbit, iguana, etc.), we recommend still using the steps in the handouts and always erring on the side of caution for both animals' safety.