



HOW TO INTRODUCE A DOG AND A CAT

Not all dogs and cats will get along. If your dog lunges at, growls at, snaps at, or shows any aggression toward a quiet cat, this may not be the right match. Likewise, if your cat growls at, hisses at, swats at, or shows any aggression toward a quiet dog, this also may not be the right match.

○ Prepare the Resident Pet	<p>When preparing for the new pet, your goal should be to minimize disruptions for the resident pet. Ideally, the resident pet should have a pre-existing safe place with all resources. The space should allow the resident pet to continue their life without major changes.</p> <p>Plan where the new pet will live. Place their resources in this area and gradually lay them around your home in advance of the new pet's arrival.</p> <p>Plug in and switch on environmental pheromones.</p>
○ Quarantine	<p>A new pet should be quarantined for a week until it has had a vet checkup and has been cleared of illness.</p> <p>Make sure the arrival of a new pet means great things happen for the resident pet. Provide extra one-on-one time doing whatever the pet loves.</p>
○ Prepare Each for the Introduction Process	<p>Ensure your resident dog has mastered basic obedience cues such as "Sit" and "Stay" so that you can ask him to demonstrate good manners around your new cat.</p> <p>Ensure that your resident cat has a dog-free sanctuary. The sanctuary room can be of any size, but it must have a secure door. The space should include all their essential resources: food, water, litter box, scratching post, toys, and hiding areas.</p> <p>Initially these separate spaces should prevent the pets from interacting unless supervised.</p> <p>Avoid bad experiences. If your pets see each other when excited or scared, they may bark/hiss or chase/run, and this will set them up for negative expectations of each other.</p>
○ Introduce Your Pets to Each Other's Scent	<p>Rub your dog with a clean fabric such as a sock or towel, and then place it into the cat's area, and vice versa. Build up to rubbing each pet's scent onto the other's resources.</p> <p>The scented item should initially be placed away from the cat's valued resources.</p> <p>For every positive interaction with the sock or towel, reward each of them with treats, so that they come to associate each other's presence with pleasant things.</p> <p>When both are relaxed around each other's scents, allow each to investigate the other's areas in their absence.</p>

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<p><input type="radio"/> Feed Your Pets on the Opposite Sides of a Solid Closed Door</p>	<p>Put your new pet's dish a few feet from the closed door to their room. Put your resident pet's dish from the other side of that door, also a few feet away. Put food in each pet's bowl.</p> <p>With each feeding, move their food bowls a little closer to the door. If either pet becomes anxious, move the bowls back to the previous locations.</p> <p>Continue this process until each pet can eat next to the door without a fuss.</p>
<p><input type="radio"/> Meet Face-to-Face Through Barrier</p>	<p>Introduce your pets to each other through a partially covered barrier, such as a baby gate covered by a draped towel, while both pets are engaged in a calm activity such as meal or play time. Ample distance should be provided. Sessions should be short.</p> <p>Do not confine either pet to a crate, as this will prevent them from being able to escape if they view the other as a threat.</p> <p>Keep your dog on a harness and a loose lead. Your cat must be free to retreat.</p>
<p><input type="radio"/> Hold Meet-And-Greets with Your Pets in a Neutral Space</p>	<p>Introductions should be under direct supervision. Confine your pets to separate areas when you aren't home.</p> <p>Keep your dog on a harness and a loose lead. Monitor your dog's body language and retreat if they're becoming agitated.</p> <p>Ask your dog to sit and reward with treats for calm behavior.</p> <p>Let your cat explore as desired, as long as they don't enter your dog's space. Reinforce calm behavior with treats or toys. If your cat approaches your dog, and your dog is not comfortable, divert their attention from each other with treats or toys.</p> <p>If at any point your cat seems anxious, encourage them to retreat and observe from a distance. Make sure your cat has lots of escape routes. Do not let your dog chase them.</p> <p>Keep the first few sessions short, one to two minutes. End each session before either pet becomes stressed. If either pet acts aggressive, redirect, and end the session.</p>
<p><input type="radio"/> Allow Pets Together Supervised</p>	<p>When your pets appear to be getting along, allow them loose in a neutral room.</p> <p>Keep your dog on a harness and let the leash drag on the floor, so that you can step on it if needed.</p> <p>After a minimum of successful supervised interactions, allow them unsupervised time together.</p>

Disclaimer: This checklist is intended to serve only as a starting point. A cat with inappropriate behavior should always see a vet for a health check. If your cat receives a clean bill of health, please consider contacting a cat behavior consultant. Many behavior modification techniques have detrimental effects if misapplied. A qualified professional will take a complete behavior history, develop an intervention plan customized for your cat, and guide you through its implementation.



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