

Cat Introductions

Bringing home a new cat can be fun and exciting for the whole family. Even if your new cat has never been around other cats before, they can still be a great companion for your resident pets (or at least peacefully coexist!) The key to ensuring the best possible outcome is to introduce your new cat to your home and to existing pets slowly and carefully. Here are some tips to help make a successful transition to the new home!

1. **Safe room:** When your new cat is in the safe room, feed the two cats on opposite sides of the door. This will associate something positive (eating!) with the sounds & smells of the other cat.
2. **Swap scents:** Scent is a common and important way for cats to communicate and recognize one another. Switch sleeping blankets or beds between the cats so they have a chance to become accustomed to each other's scent in a nonthreatening way, without the direct presence of the other cat.
3. **Switch living areas:** Once your new cat has adjusted to the "safe room," let your new cat have free time in the house while confining your resident cat(s) to the new cat's room. This switch allows your animals to experience each other's scents without a face-to-face meeting. It also provides the newcomer a chance to become familiar with his/her new surroundings without being frightened by the other animals.
4. **Take it slow:** Keep in mind that it can take time for cats to get used to the presence of another cat. After swapping scents and living areas, you can try visual introductions so the cats can see one another without being able to directly interact. If the cats' body language suggests that they are curious and friendly (as opposed to scared or threatened), you may proceed to supervised interactions. Every cat is different, and some cats may adjust faster than others. Some cat pairs may be successfully introduced in a few days, whereas others may take a few weeks. Let your cats determine when they are ready.
5. **Avoid fearful/aggressive meetings:** Avoid any negative interactions. If fearful or aggressive interactions are allowed to become a habit, they can be difficult to change. You can expect mild forms of these behaviors, but don't give them the opportunity to intensify. Deter or distract them with treats, toys or by separation.
6. **Don't punish:** Don't punish either cat for avoiding, hissing, or swatting at the other, as that is likely only to form a negative association in the cat's mind. Instead, positively reinforce desired behaviors with treats, playtime, and positive verbal cues--even if that is just coexisting without interacting.

For more tips and tricks, click below to watch [Jackson Galaxy](#) explain cat introductions:

