

Overview

You've decided to adopt an adult cat! Congratulations! The experience of being in a shelter or foster situation is very stressful for animals. They are very territorial and don't like change. Don't be disappointed if your new addition hides under the bed for days to weeks after you bring them home.

Before the Arrival

You should do a few things to prepare your home to help make it as comfortable and welcoming as possible for the new cat, and a trip to the store might be necessary. You should consider the following:

- Litter Box (one for every cat, plus an extra) and litter
- Scratching Posts
- Toys (every cat is different, so you are best to get an assortment of textures, sizes, weights and colours)
- Food and water dishes (some cats have a material preference, so you may need to switch this up)
- Pheromone spray or diffuser
- An enclosed space (box, bed, or kennel) for your cat to curl up and hid in
- A high perch to lord over you all (a sturdy cat tree will work well)

A NOTE ON PHEROMONES

Products like Feliway or Feliway MultiCat mimic the natural Facial pheromones ('happy markers') cats leave behind when they rub their faces on items in the home. It acts as a sign they feel safe and comfortable in their environment. They can help ease transitions and introductions to new homes and resident pets. We strongly suggest using this to help with the adjustment period.

If you have children, it is a good idea to talk with them and help them understand that the cat will need space to adjust for the first few days. They may prefer to hide and only come out when it's quiet.

It's a good idea to help your cat explore their new space bit by bit. Choose a small room in your house, like a bathroom or laundry room, and set up a bed, litter box, food and water. Make this "home base" for the first few days.

The First Day Home

Once the big day has arrived, prepare the kennel by placing a few towels or a small blanket that has been sprayed with Feliway inside. This will help them feel safe from the start. On the ride home, try to keep the volume in the car to a minimum. Some soothing classical music can also help. Once you arrive back home, place the cat directly into the room you have set up for them, and let them explore at their own pace.

Allow each member of your family time to sit in the room with the new cat alone. Remind them to let the cat come to them. If the cat is feeling scared or anxious, it may not come out. Leave them to adjust and try again later.

Keep in mind that they may not eat very much at first. If this behaviour continues for a few days, it's best to call us for advice.

As they become more familiar with that room, you can try to offer some tasty treats to entice them to come to say hi. Once they are comfortable in that room, you can gradually expand the range to the whole house.

Your new cat will become more adjusted over the next few weeks, and its true personality will start to shine! Be sure to make playtime a part of the routine. It's a great bonding exercise and helps to keep cats happy. Try a variety of new toys and see what they think is exciting. If your cat is a birder, make them a cozy nest in their favourite window so they can watch in comfort. Mousers might love food puzzles. We suggest the Doc and Pheobe Indoor Hunting Feeder.

We suggest bringing your new cat to see us within the first week for a wellness exam. If you were given vaccination records by the shelter, or rescue group please bring them along.



Adopting an adult cat can be a very rewarding experience. We are so pleased to be a part of your new cat's health care team. We look forward to helping you keep your new pet in the best health. Feel Free to contact us with any questions that might arise over the adjustment period.