

INTRODUCING A NEW CAT TO YOUR RESIDENT CAT

Need More Help?

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When introducing cats, we recommend a slow and safe introduction. While it may be tempting to let your resident cat greet the newcomer right away, the consequences of a not-so-great first impression might have lingering effects.

Create a Calm Space

No one wants to feel anxious or stressed when meeting someone for the first time. Cats are sensitive to change in their environment and routines. Give both cats plenty of time to adjust to a new routine before meeting.

- Set up a sanctuary room for the new cat*
- Block the resident cat from entering sanctuary
- Provide a quiet, covered den for the new cat

Create Positive Associations

- After three days, let each cat smell each other's belongings.
- Begin feeding each cat on opposite sides of a closed door. Watch for signs of stress, such as not eating, tense posture, hissing or swishing tail.
- Once both cats seem comfortable eating on opposite sides of a closed door, see if you can entice under-the-door paw-play with a toy.
- After seven days, place a barrier such as a screen door or baby gate (you can stack two on top of each other) in the sanctuary doorway. Keep initial interaction supervised and brief. Pair positive responses with tasty food treats.
- Once both cats are relaxed in each other's presence, you can supervise short meet-and-greet sessions. Slowly build the amount of time they spend with each other.

Inspire Confidence

- Your resident cat shouldn't feel neglected. Be sure you are spending time playing and cuddling with both cats. Senior cats may need more reassurance.
- Provide enough vertical space by adding wall shelves or cat trees to your home. Cats will feel territorially secure when they have plenty of spaces where they can nap, play, and soak their scent.
- One litter box is not enough! The rule of thumb is one litter box per cat, plus one extra.
- The more accommodations, the merrier! Every room the cats have access to should have something they can each scratch and leave their scent on. You can decrease the chances of quarrels by providing equal opportunities to prized napping spots and toys.
- Individual play sessions with interactive toys can help release tension. See if your cat can focus on play in the presence of your new cat. Use wand toys or treats to redirect any strained encounters.

*Please refer to our adult cat or kitten adoption guides for more information about sanctuary rooms.

We are always here to help! You can find additional behavior and training resources at pasadenahumane.org/behavior.



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