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How To Introduce Old Pets To New Pets

Are You Getting A New Pet For Christmas?

Congratulations! Your animal family is growing. This is an exciting time for everyone involved. Not only are you getting a new furry animal companion, but your existing pets are also.



Just like people meeting for the first time, animal introductions can be awkward, uncomfortable, and sometimes tricky.

Of course if at all possible, we always recommend making introductions and meetings before you are fully committed to a new animal. Below we examine some best practices for introducing your new furry family member to the existing crew.

How To Introduce Cat to Cat

Cats by nature are social animals. They are meant to live as a group and readily understand the ins and outs of group society. This doesn't mean that cats will warm up instantly to a newcomer though. There is strict protocol, even in the wild, which cats must

follow when accepting a new member into the social group



social group.



A new cat to a group will spend days, if not weeks, trailing the group so that they can become familiar with his or her scent. The same should be repeated in your home. Allow the new cat to have a small and dedicated space to call his or her own. Allow the existing cats to come and go as normal and allow them

to smell the new cat. This can be through a door or a baby gate. Sometimes it helps to take towels or rags with the new cat's scent on them and place them in high traffic areas around the house where the existing cats will become used to the new smell.

Over time, start limited and monitored introductions until the cats can co-habitat and live as one social unit. It is important to remember that this can take weeks or even months. Don't rush things!

How To Introduce Dog to Dog

Of course, having an initial introductory period is always recommended. Have a friend help you with the first introduction. Take your existing dog for a walk in a neutral area such as a dog park or trail. Have someone walk the new dog and gradually approach the existing dog. Allow the two dogs to smell each other and make their own introductions.



It is important to keep both dogs in a neutral area where one dog does not feel he or she has a territory to defend.

Once the introduction has been successful, it is time to move into the house. One suggestion is to keep a crate for the dog. Put the new dog in the crate while the existing dog is able to roam around and go about his or her normal activity.

The new dog can observe. Then, after a period of time switch the dogs so the new dog is able to explore the new space. Over time the two dogs will be able to live together. It is important to always monitor the dogs when they are together.

How To Introduce Cat to Dog

The best way to do a cat to dog introduction is to allow the cat maintain control of the situation. To do this, have the cat and dog in a small, controlled area. Be sure to have the dog





tightly leashed.

Allow the cat and dog to smell each other and reward the dog for calm behavior. Repeat this process for as long as necessary and eventually, the dog will learn to be calm around the cat.

New family members can be exciting but also can be stressful if initial introductions do not go as smoothly as anticipated. Remember to not give up hope. Relationships don't form overnight and sometimes it can take months to make progress.

If you need help or would like more information on proper introductions between animals, feel free to reach out to the professionals at Adobe Animal Hospital of Soquel and [schedule an appointment](#) today!



Please make an appointment to discuss your pet's health:



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