

Please Read This First!!!

Helping Your New Cat to Settle In

The Pets Bring Joy team is delighted that you have chosen one (or more!) of our kitties to join your family ... please take time to read through this page on how to get your new family member(s) settled in.

Please stay in touch with your adoption coordinator – Alyson, Helen, Jacquie, Lori, or Melissa – to pose any questions you might have, or email us at info@pbj.org, now or at any time in the future. ***We are here for you for the lifetime of your new feline family member(s) to ensure a “happily ever after” outcome for everyone. :o)***

#1 PRIORITY: Start your new cat out in a single room, with litter box, food, water, and CLOSED door

It is very stressful for a cat to move from one environment to another – first, they are placed in a cat carrier (scary!), then driven in a car (scary!) into an unfamiliar place (new smells, new sounds, new sights – SCARY!!!). Even the friendliest and most outgoing cat will need time to settle in, feel safe, and learn to trust new human family members, as well as any other pets currently living in the home.

Choose a room where your new cat will be safe and have some privacy, but where there are no inaccessible hiding places. Bathrooms are best, especially if they have a window to look out of; bedrooms, offices, or finished basements can all be good choices, provided that there are no places where the cat can hide so as to be inaccessible. One downside of using a bedroom is that a cat may hide under the bed for an extended period of time. In a bathroom, the cat may “hide” behind the toilet or shower curtain, but is still accessible.

Put the litter box**, food, water, toys, everything the cat needs in that room ... then, with the door closed, let the cat out of the carrier to explore the room. Do not be shocked if the cat decides to hide ... allow him/her peace and quiet. Leave the room, close the door, and give the cat privacy to sort things out on his or her own. Do not try to force the cat out of hiding, but feel free to spend time in the room, talking gently, listening to music, conversing with a friend on the phone, or quietly reading a book to give the cat a chance to get comfortable with your presence.

*** If you ultimately want the litter box to be in a different location in your home, you can move it gradually over a period of several days, several feet at a time, to its new location.*

STEP #2: Venturing out from the “safe room”

Once the new cat has used the litterbox several times and is “asking” to leave the room to explore (i.e., waiting at the door to greet you and trying to dart out), you are ready for the next step, which can either be:

- Introduction to other pets (see separate handouts for how to accomplish this) or
- Liberty to explore your home, with the cat doing the walking and you following along to observe

Please be patient with your new cat! It might take several hours, several days, or even longer for him/her get to Step #2 ... but, trust us – it will happen! :o)



Pets Bring Joy®

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