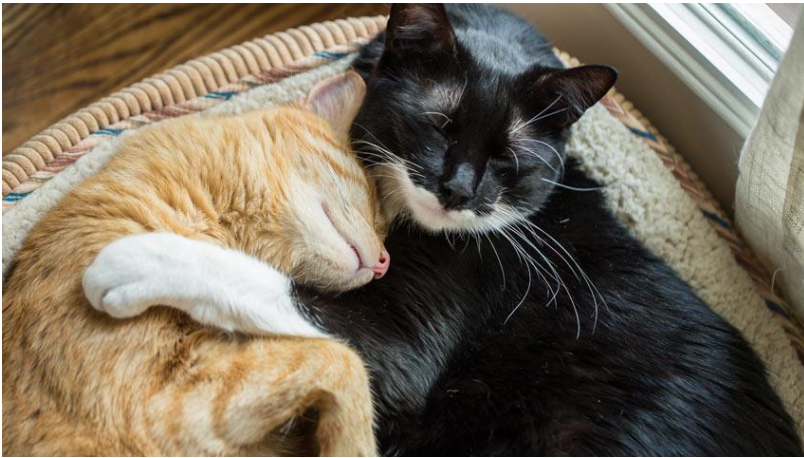


Introducing Your New Cat to Your Resident Cat



The average house cat spends its whole life without meeting another. Bringing a new cat into your home can be very threatening and scary to your resident cat. Your new cat will be brought into an environment that is entirely new to them. For many cats this can be stressful enough... add meeting an upset resident cat to the mix and the experience can become overwhelming. A gradual and methodical introduction of these cats can be essential to ensuring a lasting friendship, and peace in your home.

Step 1 – Introduction by scent

The first exposure your cats should have to each other is through their scent paired with food, to create a positive association.

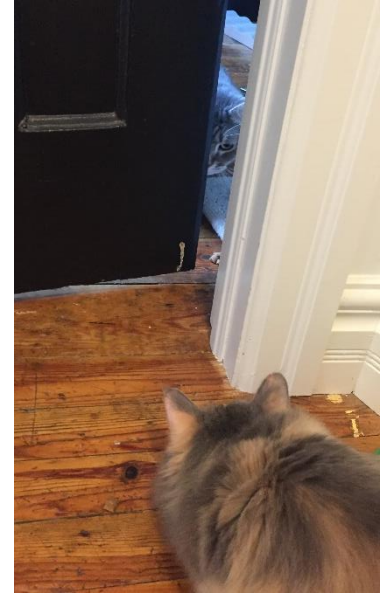
- Setup a sanctuary room for your new cat. This room should have all the cat essentials, like food, water, a litter box, a scratching post, comfortable resting places, hiding spots, places to climb up on, and toys.
- Feed both cats several small meals per day a few feet away from either side of the door.
- Each day (before mealtime) rub a sock around the cheeks and chin (the location of many scent glands) of each cat. Place the sock beside the food bowl of the other cat.
- Decrease the distance between the bowls and the door each day, provided both cats eat without much hesitation and neither exhibits signs of fear.
- Take any uneaten food with you after mealtime. Do not free feed your cats.



Step 2 – Introduction by sight

Once both cats are eating directly on either side of the door without showing signs of fear, it is time to let them start seeing each other during mealtimes.

- Move the food bowls back a few feet, and start the process over again, allowing your cats to see (but not access) each other. This can be done by using a baby gate, or by opening the door a few inches and securing it in place using a door stop during mealtime.
- Continue swapping scents using the sock method.
- Again, decrease the distance between the bowls and the door each day, provided both cats eat without much hesitation, and neither exhibits signs of fear.
- If either cat starts to show signs of fear or aggression, try to distract with high value rewards, such as treats, play, or petting.
- After mealtime take any uneaten food with you and close the door.



Step 3 – Supervised interactions



Once both cats are eating directly on either side of the door with visual contact without showing signs of fear, it is time to allow supervised interactions. This will be easiest with two people.

- Distract your resident cat with food, play, or petting in a relatively large room.
- Allow your new cat to enter the room, but try to keep them occupied with food, play, or petting on the other side of the room.
- If your cats interact in a relaxed or friendly manner, let them. If you start to see signs of fear or aggression (including prolonged staring) try to distract them away from each other.
- Increase the length of these sessions each day, provided neither cat exhibits signs of fear.

Step 4 – Freedom

Eventually as the length of these sessions increase and you start to trust your cats around each other, you can allow your cats to roam freely around the home. It is wise to continue to monitor their interactions periodically, but hopefully, as a result of your careful, methodical introduction, your cats will coexist peacefully and hopefully become the best of friends!

