

# INTRODUCING NEW DOGS OR CATS TO THE HOUSEHOLD

## INTRODUCING A NEW CAT TO THE FAMILY

- Let the cat come to you and don't force him to stay.
- Provide private areas where the cat can escape.
- Introduce the new cat to family members one at a time.

## INTRODUCING A NEW CAT TO A RESIDENT CAT

- **Go slowly and make sure cats are comfortable with each stage before progressing!**
  - **Use food, petting, and toys as rewards for calm, non-aggressive behavior.**
1. At first the cats should only smell and hear each other, not see each other.
  2. Keep the new cat in a bedroom, and feed each cat on opposite sides of the door. If they show fear or aggression, feed the cats farther away from the door.
  3. Push a toy under the door from each side to stimulate play behavior.
  4. After the new cat is comfortable in the room (takes hours to days), confine the resident cat to the room and allow the new cat supervised free time. Switch cats back and forth to let them get use to the other cat's smell.
  5. If there is no fear or aggression after a few days, use doorstops to wedge the door open a crack.
  6. If there are no problems after a few days, use doorstops to wedge the door open slightly more so the cats can see each other without being able to go through the opening.
  7. When the cats are first allowed physical contact, keep the initial session brief and offer food, toys, and petting rewards for calm behavior.
  8. If any conflicts occur try to distract the cats with toys or go into the kitchen and open a can of tuna to distract the resident cat. If a fight occurs, use an air horn or a water gun to break it up. If there is any conflict, go back several steps in the introduction process.

## INTRODUCING A CAT TO A DOG

- **Steps 1-2, 4-7 from above can also be used for introducing a dog and cat.**
  - **Go slow and do not proceed from one step to the next unless both pets are calm.**
1. When it is time for the face-to-face meeting, put the dog on a leash and have the cat confined to a crate if possible. Give praise and treats to the dog for sitting and staying without charging the crate. Give the cat praise and treats for not being fearful.
  2. Keep the cat in the crate and allow the dog to be loose as long as he remains calm.
  3. Take the dog on a leash and allow the cat out. Make the dog lie down and stay. Give the dog praise, petting, and treats for staying and do the same for the cat for not being fearful.
  4. Allow more interaction by letting the dog get up and drag the leash. If there is any concern about the dog, place a muzzle on him. If the cat swipes at the dog and he does not back down, make the dog sit and stay. If the dog tries to chase the cat, use a water gun to immediately distract him. Then back up several steps in the introduction process and proceed more slowly.
  5. Control the dog so he does not harass the cat.