



TIPS ON INTRODUCING NEW DOG TO EXISTING CAT

Dogs and cats can usually live together peacefully, although creating a harmonious family requires some planning, patience, and careful guidance on your part. In some cases, your dog and cat will become best friends.

When introducing a new dog into your house, you must remember that dogs can injure a cat (and vice versa), even if they are only playing, so you should never leave the dog alone with your cat.

Before bringing a dog into a home with an existing cat, be sure to do the following: -

- Create safe places for your cat, where the new dog cannot get to it (e.g. use a baby gate). Your cat should have a safe place in every room, even if it is only the top of a bookcase.
- Put your cat's litter tray in a safe area. Many dogs eat cat faeces, and if the dog startles the cat whilst on the litter tray, the cat may become afraid and relieve itself elsewhere in the house.
- Keep the cat's food and water bowls in a safe area as well. cat food is too rich for dogs, and dog food lacks vital nutrients needed for the cats' eyesight and heart.
- Work out if your new dog understands basic commands, such as "sit", "stay" and "leave". This will be helpful with the introductions.



The Introduction:

- Beforehand, take your dog out for a walk and feed him/her a nice meal, as this will help the dog to relax.
- Put the cat in a safe place, and let the dog roam the house for about 30-45 minutes; this allows for the dog to "meet" the cat by smell only. Then take the dog out for another short walk and let the cat "meet" the dog by smell only.
- Put your dog on a short lead, (for the first few days, if necessary) – this will allow you to make a quick correction if he starts to chase the cat.
- Put your cat in a carrier if he/she's typically skittish; otherwise, let her/him walk around. Be ready with lots of treats for good behaviour.
- The cat's first reaction will likely be to hiss and/or run - this is perfectly normal.
- Let dog and cat check each other out at a distance. Pet and talk to your dog soothingly. Do not let your dog approach the cat just yet. Give your dog and cat some treats and praise as rewards.



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If your dog bolts toward your cat, correct him/her with the lead, and use the "sit" or "leave" command. If your dog shows any signs of excessive excitability, calm him/her down and try again. If this doesn't do the trick, cut the introduction short and try again later. Praise the dog (or give a treat) the moment that he/she complies and stops trying to get to the cat.

· Repeat these short visits several times a day, gradually giving your dog more lead as appropriate.

DO NOT MOVE TO THE NEXT PHASE UNTIL YOU HAVE SEVERAL CONSECUTIVE DAYS OF INCIDENT-FREE VISITS, IN WHICH BOTH ANIMALS DEMONSTRATE TO YOUR SATISFACTION THAT THEY ARE COMFORTABLE WITH EACH OTHER.

Proceed with Caution

Once your dog and cat consistently get along during leashed visits, you're ready for the next step. Let go of the lead but be prepared to grab it or step on it if he/she attempts to go after the cat. If the cat swats the dog on the nose, distract the dog with a toy, but don't punish the cat. Often, all it takes is one swat from the cat for a dog to learn his/her lesson.

Be sure to speak in a calm and soothing voice and use both animals' names. If there are any toilet accidents, simply clean it up using non biological washing powder, do not tell either animal off.

Take your dog off the lead and supervise the two closely. If you see problems, and they don't resolve with a few simple voice commands, go back to the previous phase for a few days.



Gradually make the no-lead sessions longer. Do not leave the cat and dog alone until you're sure they're both fully comfortable with each other.

Until you know that your dog and cat will be ok when feeding, separate them on either side of a door. This will allow them to associate something enjoyable with the other's smell while eating.

Swap their bedding, so that they will get used to the other's smell.

Be sure that the animals are healthy and that you are aware of any medical problems, otherwise this could prolong the introduction process.

If you are introducing a dog into a household with a kitten, use extra caution. A kitten is more likely to be injured by an energetic dog.

If introductions don't go smoothly, call the sanctuary for further advise. Your pets can be severely injured in fights, and the longer the problem continues, the harder it can be to resolve. Conflicts between pets in the same family can often be resolved with professional help, punishment will not work and could make things worse.

With time, your dog and cat will get used to each other and you will gradually be able to let them interact freely. However, If you feel that your dog and cat are not getting on, separate them immediately and get in touch with us on 01823 490333 for further advice.