



Settling your new cat into the family



Gradually and gently exposing your cat to a range of experiences is key to setting them up for success in their new home. You can socialise your cat by gradually introducing them to people, other pets and everyday things going on in your household.

Set the groundwork for a positive relationship by following a predictable schedule for feeding and cleaning, and try to keep your home calm and quiet. Keep all interactions with your new cat respectful; the more control you can give them, the safer and more confident they will feel.

The first night

First impressions count. Show your cat that their new home is safe and has everything they need. Set up a quiet place that your new cat can call their own, and include all the basics (food, water, toys, hiding places, a bed, chances to climb, a scratching post and litter trays).



Cats love to be surrounded by familiar things like blankets or toys that carry their scent, and familiar foods so try and bring along some familiar things to help them settle.

If they don't want to eat or come out of hiding, just let them do their thing but check on them regularly.

Settling in

After a few days, slowly introduce your new cat to other areas of your home. Let them take things at their own pace and give them plenty of safe cosy hideouts so they can retreat if they need. Scattering food can help coax them out of hiding.

Your cat might prefer to just watch you and share your company, but see if your cat would like to play, be patted or brushed – follow their lead! Short but regular doses of human attention are best.

Most cats do not like intense hugging or touching sensitive areas of their body (e.g., ears, paws, tail, and back).

Instead, try stroking their cheek, chin, or forehead for a few seconds. If they nudge you, they're asking for more. If they move away, don't force things, just let them be. Allow your cat to control the interactions to build trust and help them feel confident.



Got a nervous nelly?

Pheromone spray or diffusers can help make your cat feel calmer. How can you tell if they're nervous or calm? Watch their body language. If your cat's body is tense, their ears are back and their tail is flicking, they might be telling you that they're stressed so give them some space and slow things down.

The home stretch

Once your cat is starting to settle and feel confident in their new home, you can introduce your other pets, friends and family. Again, follow your cat's lead, pay attention to their **body language** and let them initiate and control interactions.

Prepare to make any changes gradually. For example, if you're changing their food, transition over about 7 days.

The settling in period is especially important if you're bringing home a new kitten because they're experiencing things for the first time. Gentle handling of kittens when they are 2 to 7 weeks of age is essential to help them form positive relationships with people into the future.

With gentle handling, friendly interactions, and time to themselves to rest and observe, your cat will soon settle into their new home.

