

Problem Solving for You and Your Cat



Introducing Your New Cat to Your Dog

Introduce your cat/kitten to your dog as slowly as possible.

Before letting them meet face to face, allow them time to investigate each other's scent.

Put your dog outside and allow the cat time to roam free and to investigate the smell of the dog throughout the house. Then return the cat to their designated room and shut the door. Now you can allow your dog to smell where the cat has been roaming throughout the house. Do this for short periods over time, as regularly as you need. Doing this will make the meeting between your dog and cat less stressful as they have had time to smell each other and accept their presence.

- When you feel both animals are familiar with each other's scents and are comfortable (e.g. carrying out normal behaviours and not obsessed with the smell of each other) you can proceed to supervised introductions.
- Always keep your dog on a short leash for initial introductions.
- Never force your cat or dog to get closer than they are comfortable with.
- Exercise or feed your dog before introductions to reduced excitability.
- Reward positive behaviours.
- Watch the body language of your dog and cat and if either becomes fearful give them a break and try again the next day. This process may take time but if done slowly is more likely to be successful.
- Repeat the introductions for short periods several times a day, gradually giving your dog more leash length.

NEVER leave a cat and a dog alone unsupervised (especially when food is involved) until you are sure they do not pose a threat to each other.

When you feel they are comfortable with each other and it is safe to do so, you can allow your dog off the leash for short supervised interactions.

- Give your cat a safe dog-free space to retreat to, by using cat doors or baby gates to stop your dog entering their sanctuary space.
- Keep their litter box and food out of the dog's reach.
- Distract and remove the dog from the room if they get overstimulated and chase the cat.
- Reward good interactions.