



Dog and Cat Introductions

When bringing home a dog always take things slow and be patient. It is a big change for the dog and the cat. If you take the time to slowly introduce them, it increases the chances of a harmonious household. Remember, that even if the dog was tested with cats in the shelter that is only one glimpse of how a dog reacts to cats in a structured environment. Below is information that will help you with the introduction.



Use high value treats when only working on dog/cat introduction to help motivate good behavior.

- Confine cat prior to bringing dog into the home. This will help keep the cat less stressed when the dog is entering the home.
- Walk the dog throughout the house with a leash, once you have done this you can drop the leash allow the dog to roam and explore. Have plenty of high value treats to reward the dog for good "in door" behavior.
- After the dog has had some time to explore, confine him to a kennel (covered) or a bedroom/bathroom.
- You can then allow your cat out of confinement to explore the new smells.
- Alternate between the cat and dog on who has freedom in the house for the next few days.
- If your cat is acting pretty normal and not being too effected by the presence of a dog then start doing introductions with the dog on leash. You can also do a few introductions through a baby gate.
- Have both pets in the same room, getting high value treats. For dogs, you can use hot dogs and for cats you can use tuna or salmon.

- If the dog is too distracted by the cat to take treats then move the dog further away until he will take treats from you. Keep initial sessions short so that you end things on a good note.
- Once you see how close you can get to the cat and still have the dog's attention, work on calm behaviors (still on leash) while cat is around for a few days. Calm behaviors include, sitting, down, stay, and relaxation.
- If things continue to go well, allow the leash to drag while the dog and cat are around each other. Reward for calm behavior.
- If at any time the dog shows aggression or prey drive towards the cat, go back a step and take it slower.
- Do not leave the cat and dog unattended at any time. When not home make sure to confine the dog to a kennel or bedroom/bathroom or confine cat to bedroom/bathroom.
- If the dog is chasing the cat, make sure it is not because he is bored. Providing plenty of physical and mental exercise can prevent problems.