

Welcoming a New Cat into Your Home

Adopting a new cat can be a real adventure, and it's definitely something that shouldn't be done lightly. After all, the right pet, with the right personality for your household, will bring many years of joy! If you're nervous about the idea of getting a new cat, read some of the many [success stories](#) we've received from people who have adopted one of our pets. Even if you are mourning the loss of a much-loved pet, adopting a new animal can be a happy occasion. There's nothing quite like the companionship of a cat - they are such independent creatures that gaining their trust and affection is truly a wonderful thing.

Preparing for the New Arrival

If you've had cats before, or have one or more cats currently, this part should be quite easy! However, if you're bringing home your first cat, it's worthwhile making a few simple preparations to help make the transition easier for your new pet. For example, make sure you've got everything your new cat will need within the first few days-such as food, dishes, toys, a bed, scratching post, and litter box-already in place before you bring him home. This is so you can make the journey from the SPCA to your home as short as possible. Car rides are distressing to most cats, and you want to keep the amount of upheaval he'll experience to a minimum.

Cats are very territorial animals, and entering new territory is by nature a stressful business for them. You can help your cat feel more comfortable by preparing a quiet room for him where he can get used to his new environment in private. If he has a covered cat bed this will work very well, but even a simple cardboard box, with a couple of holes cut in it, can provide the privacy he needs. This should be placed in a corner of the room, with litter box, and food and water, close by. When you bring the cat home, put him where he wants to - once he's stopped hiding, is affectionate, and is eating willingly, he should be ready to explore outside of the room. This can take a couple of days, but don't be alarmed if he needs a bit of extra time; every cat is different.

Introducing your New Cat to Existing Pets

Bringing a new cat into a home where you already have one or more cats or dogs can be a bit more difficult - animals have different personalities just like people do, so there's usually a bit of a settling-in period while the animals get to know one another. It's important to let cats in particular get acquainted very gradually, due to their territorial natures, and there are some [simple things you can do](#) to help your cats even before they meet face-to-face. Make sure your new cat is comfortable in his private room before starting to make any introductions, and be patient - this will be a slow process, and it could be a month or more before the cats are relaxed enough to be left alone. Until then, close supervision is important, to prevent fights breaking out.

Keep your New Family Member Happy and Healthy

Taking care of the health and wellbeing of your pet, for his entire life, is most important. However, since your cat can't tell you when he's feeling sick, it's vital to know [what kinds of signs](#) might indicate that he's unwell. Once you get familiar with your cat, and what his normal behavior patterns are, it becomes quite a bit easier to notice these signs. Give some thought to future medical expenses, too-for example, consider getting some [healthcare coverage](#) for your cat (and for any other pets you might have) to make sure that you'll always be able to keep him healthy. Keeping your pet in good health, with regular booster

vaccinations and checkups as needed, can be a significant financial commitment, and it's good to have the peace of mind that pet health insurance can bring. In a situation where a sudden injury or sickness means extra vet bills, the last thing you want to be doing is worrying about money-after all, you'd rather be thinking about your pet at this time.

Another possibility to consider is getting your pet microchipped. In this process, a tiny electronic chip, containing information about your cat and where he lives, is inserted under his skin. If he ever ends up at the SPCA, scanning the microchip will immediately show these details. While it's not compulsory to do thisPenang, it's a good way to keep track of your cat, and help to ensure that he'll be able to make his way back home if he strays too far.

Written by: Julie Hamilton