



Introducing a Kitten to Your Cat or Dog

Introductions are always important with our feline companions. Just as there are proper rules of etiquette when we meet someone for the first time, there are certain guidelines which can aid your kitten in having a successful introduction to other cats or dogs in the household.

Check out [Bringing Home Your New Maine Coon Kitten](#) and [Socializing Your Maine Coon Kitten](#) for additional tips.

When you first bring your new fur baby home there is so much excitement and eagerness for them to become acquainted with the household. Remember this is a stressful, transitional time as they are used to being with their mom and littermates. Take things slowly when making introductions to other pets. Be sure they have had a proper quarantine period. Allowing play time through the door with a string or other toy that can be shared will allow your kitten and other cat(s) to start getting used to one another before they meet face to face.

If you are introducing them to your dog, allowing them to smell one another through the crack at the bottom of the door is a wonderful way to slowly start them getting acquainted. Remember to take extra precautionary steps if you have an aggressive cat or dog.

Set the stage with a controlled environment. Once they are used to the smell of each other bringing them into a room where your other cat or dog are is a great way to let them meet. Crates allow some protection, but an aggressive dog can still harm them so always be ready to intercede if necessary. If your kitten is agile enough to get over a baby gate this can be used when introducing them to your dog, but have your dog on a leash for the first few

introductions in case they chase aggressively. Be sure to supervise at all times during the introduction period. Always give yourself plenty of time and be prepared to spend a couple weeks if necessary to allow them to socialize properly. Every cat and dog are different. Some will become fast friends, while others may be slower to warm up to the idea of a new pet in the household. Don't force the relationship. Be patient, as cats don't like feeling forced into friendships. With time and patience the relationship can evolve comfortably on its own.

Swapping Blankets or Bedding? Another way to allow your kitten and other household pets to get used to one another's scent is by swapping bedding or blankets. Some are very accepting of the new kitten smell and this can facilitate a quicker socialization period. Not every cat or dog appreciates the smell of a new kitten on their bedding. If they are dismayed and tear up the bedding or urinate/defecate upon it they are sending a message. If this approach seems to take a negative turn you can consult your veterinarian and try some of the other suggested methods.

Playpen Tents and Multilevel Cat/Ferret Cages are large enough to accommodate a litter box and food/water bowls. These can be great tools to keep your kitten separated while placing it in the room with other household pets. They can smell one another and spend time in the same room without being 100% together. Remember to monitor your pets during this time. Patience is key and reach out if your pet seems to be having a difficult time accepting their new companion.

Jealousy can be minimized if you keep your pets on their normal schedule and routine as much as possible. Remember they still need your love and affection now just as much as they did before.

Dogs and cats socialize differently so remember to have lots of patience and that one size does not fit all when introducing your companion animals to one another. Younger animals are often more adaptable and accepting than senior citizens. Plan extra socialization time if you have a geriatric pet in the household and don't be pushy if they are hesitant to accept a new kitten right away.