



Requirements for a Successful Adoption

These guidelines are the result of thousands of hours of contact and years of experience rescuing, socializing, and placing animals in homes. We have learned what works and what doesn't. These guidelines are intended to address some of the most common mistakes made by adoptive families. We want you and your pet to be happy and mostly we want your home to be a "forever" home for your pet.

Please follow these instructions:

1. **Never release a new cat/kitten into your home upon arrival.**

Your kitten/cat is not yet familiar with you or the sights, smells, and sounds of its new environment. It needs some time to adjust to its' new surroundings and to bond with you and your family. Otherwise it may sulk around or hide for days.

- a) Place your new pet in a small room where it cannot hide under furniture, beds, chairs, tables, ect...

A bathroom is ideal!

Place the litter box, bed, scratching post, food, water and toys in this confined area and frequent the room as often as possible.

- b) If you have another pet in the household, this will provide a means for each to get to know one another under the door without undue stress or confrontation. This is also a good time to place a blanket or toy from the current pet into the room with the new pet. This will give the new pet an opportunity to "sniff out" his new playmate in a safe way. Be sure to place a blanket or toy from the new pet and give it to your current pet for him/her to "smell" the new friend.

- c) Once your new pet is calm, comfortable and has bonded with you. (I wait until they come for food.)

Open the door and allow your new pet to safely explore the house at will. Keep existing pets in an enclosed area so the new pet can explore without feeling threatened.

- d) To support your current pet's adjustment to the new pet ...help them to meet face to face after the new pet feels comfortable in the new environment. Expose the new pet in a crate or carrier for brief periods of time (20-40 minutes) until both animals seem calm and non-threatening.

- e) Always supervise encounters with pets until you are SURE that both are comfortable, tolerant and will be safe.

- f) If you must leave the house- Place the new pet back into its' "safe-room."

2. **Be Patient**

Remember that many of these animals have been abandoned, neglected and in some cases abused.

Trust does not come with the adoption contract. YOU MUST EARN THEIR TRUST! This could take days, weeks or months. I had one pet take an entire year to "feel" safe in our home!

3. **Pay Attention**

What is your pet's physical and emotional behavior? What if anything seems to be frightening or stressing your pet? How can you help/change the stressor? Be aware of any changes in eating or bathroom habits.

Stay with the same food for at least the first few weeks of the pet joining your home.

4. **Be Consistent**

Establish a routine! Be consistent! Speak softly! Decide where you want the food bowls, bed ect...and place the pet there so s/he knows where to go to feel safe. Do not keep moving things around in the first few weeks. Your pet will be confused enough by its new surroundings. Give as much stability as possible.

5. **Supervise**

Young children and animals should never be left unsupervised. Teach them how to interact with the pet and be gentle.

6. **ASK FOR HELP**

Don't assume your solutions or behaviors are correct. The adoption group and foster parent are familiar with this particular animal and adopted animals in general; We want to help.