

Bonding With Your New Cat

Creating a bond with your new pet cat is important for a lifetime of companionship from the beginning. Introducing your cat to their new home and family calmly and quietly will help to ensure that this bond will develop quickly.

Bringing a new cat home for the first time can be a stressful period for both the cat and the family. From the families point of view, not knowing how the cat will react to its new surroundings and how to approach the cat for the first time can be a little worrying and if not handled correctly from the beginning could lead to behavioral problems further down the road. From the cat's point of view, they find themselves in strange surroundings, with strange smells, sounds, people and even other animals.

There are a few secrets to ensuring that the whole process is less stressful and scary for all involved. Firstly put yourself in the cat's position and empathise with their feelings and experiences of their new home. Secondly take things slowly, it may all be very exciting bringing home a new pet but if the situation is not handled calmly, quietly and slowly then bonding with your cat may be a process that takes far longer and may not happen at all if the cat sees you as a scary human.

Prepare your home for the arrival of your new cat in advance. Make sure you put aside a quiet room where your cat can explore and become familiar with before encountering the larger environment. Make sure you place cat food and water, a litter tray (away from the food and bed), a bed and some toys in the room. Also the room should not be accessible to any other pets in the home.

Allow the cat to spend time alone in this room for the first 30 minutes after arrival then check on them to see if every thing is ok. Repeat this process for the first day, visiting regularly but not approaching the cat too quickly. During the next few days increase the frequency of the visits and begin to approach your cat to gain their confidence. This should be done by making yourself smaller, by kneeling on the floor, not looking the cat directly in the eyes and allowing the cat to approach you. Introduce a few games with balls and string, always going at your cats pace and never forcing them to play or approach you.

Once you are sure that your cat has gained in confidence and is happy to be around you, you can then start to introduce other members of the family, including other animals. However introducing other pets should only be done once the cat has bonded with you and should never be done without supervision.

After about three to four days and when you feel happy that the cat has relaxed and is happy to be touched and stroked by you can you begin to allow your cat access to the rest of the home. Let them take it at their own pace and always give them access to their safe room if things get a little too scary for them and they can return to quickly. Most cats will settle down fairly quickly into their new family, some may take longer; it depends on their individual personalities and their previous life experiences.

The process may sound a slow one to begin with, but gaining the confidence of a cat is all-important from the start and they must feel that they can trust you and feel safe in the new home environment before they will settle down into happy pets. Once a bond has been established between you and your cat it will be a bond that will last a lifetime, providing many hours of companionship and comfort for you both.

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Build a relationship with your cat for a lifetime.

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