



Cat Prep Kit for sections 2, 3 & 4

- A) Set up vet visit for trip home from shelter
- B) Set up your temporary safe room
- C) Setting up your feeding station & litter box
- D) Scratching posts & tree
- E) Integration into a multi-cat home

2) Take your new cat to vet before coming home if shelter does not provide a medical exam



If the shelter does not provide a medical exam, your new kitty may have some medical issues.

Many shelters have crowded conditions and it is possible that your new cat will have some feline issues. You need to have them checked out by a vet before you bring them home; especially if you have a multi-cat home.

Here is our recommendation; set an appointment with your vet for the day you will be bringing a shelter cat home. The vet may ask you to bring a fecal sample, and will want to see any medical records the shelter can provide.

The shelter can recommend a veterinarian if you do not have one. Set this up before you pick up kitty and also have your cat or kitten micro-chipped (even for an indoor cat). Ex: A friend's indoor cat slipped out and was taken to a shelter by a Good Samaritan. The shelter called the friend due to the microchip and they were reunited.

3) Set up safe room for new cat to get acclimated for a few days

If you have adopted a cat from a shelter, it is reasonable to assume this is their third home. That is why it is important to have a plan to acclimate them into their new final destination.

Cats will have to understand their new homes surroundings over time before they feel entirely safe. A house or apartment can create a lot of stress due to the difference between the cage they have been living in and all of this new space.

Your new fur-ball is going to be feeling stressed, so be prepared and ease their stress by setting up a closed-door safe room. Some cats will hide under furniture or anywhere they can find for days. Therefore, you want to introduce your cat to your home or apartment in steps...especially if there are several people or additional cats in your home.

Before you bring your new cat home; set-up a safe room with a door



Stock this room with food, water, toys, litter box and a scratching post or pad. If you have purchased a cat tree that is easy to move, then place it in this room also. You want to start the scratch training immediately, so make sure you have a scratching post in this room.

When you place your cat to the room in the cat carrier, open the door and let them come out in their own time. Do not coax them out, tip the carrier or pull them out. Keep this room closed off, and let kitty explore when they are ready. After your cat comes out of the carrier, leave the carrier in the corner as another hiding place.

Your new cat will need hiding places to feel safe and the cat carrier will help. Adding a box in the room with an opening in both sides so they can go in and out each side is a good idea too. Also, place a blanket in the box or a soft piece of your clothing (sweatshirt / shirt) that you have worn so they get used to your smell.

As you know, cats are curious creatures and want to explore their new home as soon as they feel safe. If your new cat seems timid, just leave the room and check back later. We also have an article on [“How to help a timid cat”](#).

Introduce other family members slowly



Have them come into the room one at a time to hang out and sit or play with the new furry addition. Make sure younger children sit down and show them how to gently stroke the cat's fur and offer kitty a treat.

Make a point to educate the children so they understand that they cannot chase the cat, hurt her or bother her while she eats, sleeps or uses the litter box. This is very important to your cat feeling safe.

If there are no other animals in the house, in about three days (give or take a day), or once your new cat is comfortably in their temporary room, you can expand their access to the rest of the home.

For some cats, it may take two or three weeks before they feel safe in their temporary room before they can be set free to explore the whole house. Each cat is different in terms of his or her stress levels. Like humans, some are carefree while others have environmental concerns that they want to understand.

4) After step 3, set up your permanent feeding station and litter box location

Food, Water & Litter / Set-up steps for single or multiple cats

Feeding Station Set-Up



If you live in a multi-cat home, you cannot assume your cats like eating together just because they eat when you set the food down.

Introducing a new cat means, the new kitty is low cat on the eating totem pole.

Even if you have just two kitties, do not be surprised that one of your kitties shows signs of stress during feeding time. This is especially true if you have just one feeding station.

There is a pecking order with cats and sometimes it will manifest during feeding time. One cat may bully one or more cats during this time. It may be very subtle where a dominant cat nudges another cat away from the bowl and eating the leftovers in his or her bowl too. Likewise, it can be a more aggressive move too. In this case, we recommend multiple feeding stations.

Personal Experience with one cat bullying a second cat during feeding



Twice a day we would put wet food out for our two cats and go about our business because in our minds the two cats were brothers & friends. One cat was much heavier than his brother so we thought it was just due to a larger appetite by eating more dry that we would leave out.

Finally, we started watching them eat their wet food and realized that the larger brother would wolf down his food and then move over to his brothers bowl and just gently push him out of the way. There was never any hissing or fussing so we missed it for at least a year.

Watch your cats eat completely for several feedings and position yourself away from the feeding area as you observe. If you are in the same room watching them eat, some cats will be on the best behavior.

Feeding Station Location

If you just have the one new cat you are bring home, make sure the food & water are not in an area that gets a lot of foot traffic.

Also, make sure the feeding station is not next to the litter box. Cats are very sensitive to smell and do not like to eat next to their litter box. It would be similar to setting up your kitchen table in the bathroom.

It is ok to create some separation at feeding time with two separate feeding areas when there are two or more cats.

Litter Box Set-Up



One of the most common reasons people take their cats to shelter is litter box issues. Follow the steps below will help ensure you have cats that follow the litter box rules.

As stated earlier, do not place your litter box(s) near the feeding station. Cats do not like to smell poo when they are eating.

In addition, studies have shown cats prefer a finer grained cat litter vs. larger particles. We recommend a low dust, non-perfumed scoop-able litter.

How many litter boxes do I need

The rule of thumb for the number of litter boxes; you want the same number of litter boxes as the number of felines you have in your home plus one extra. In other words, if you have three cats you will need four litter boxes.

We recommend an uncovered litter box. Litter boxes with special covers trap smells that your cat will not like. With that in mind, we want to make sure our cats are not reluctant to use their box.

The smell of urine, feces and fragranced litter will be trapped and strong in a covered box. Eliminating the smell in the box can be very important. Clean your litter box daily, dump the old every two weeks, and clean the box. Use a non-scented mild soap to clean the box. Do not use products with a strong scent or ammonia.

Scratching post, pads and cat trees



We recommend that you purchase a scratching post(s) and cat tree before you bring your new cat home.

In other words, start the scratch training as soon as kitty comes home. Cat scratching should never be seen as a sign of an upset or anxious cat and should never be punished for this activity.

Felines need to scratch for many reasons. When they scratch, they are removing old claws, which expose new sharp claws. It is a common and necessary behavior for our fur-balls and its part of their routine, identity and health and brings them great comfort.

Cats need to sharpen their claws and it is our job to show them the approved areas for this task.

Some cats understand immediately and some will need a little more time to understand the appropriate scratching surfaces in your home.

We recommend a combination of one or more scratching posts and at least one cat tree.



A well put together cat tree and scratching post is more than just a way to keep claws maintained. They also help your cats identify an item and location that they can define as their very own.

A well-designed cat tree will enhance your kitty's life by providing them a place to scratch, play, climb and hide which supplies them with exercise and entertainment all the way through the day.

Scratching posts will come in many formats. Some felines like to scratch vertical objects, while other cats like horizontal surfaces.

If you have a scratching problem, use the scratching post to initially block the item your cat wants to claw, and encourage them to use the preferred location you have set up.

Introducing a new cat into a multi-cat home & understanding their territorial needs

Bringing shelter cat home to a multi-cat environment can be way more complex for your cats than you know.

We are going to recommend going through the steps laid out by our favorite cat behavior expert; Pam Johnson-Bennett. You will need to go back to our website and read our article that will connect you with Pam's process on reducing tension between cats.

We also recommend reading: "Pam's New Cat Introduction Technique". You will find it under Step 3 in the article. [Click here to read this information now.](#)