



Bringing Home Your New Cat

Tips for the first 30 Days of Cat Adoption

Cats become stressed very easily with change so making sure that you are prepared for their arrival is very important. There are a few guidelines you can follow to help with this transition.

Before you bring your cat home:

Coming into a new home can make a cat very uneasy. Coming from a small cage in the humane society to having free rein of an entire house will prove to be quite overwhelming for your new companion. Do them a favor and provide a small area for them to call home for at least the first week. A bathroom or laundry room work really well for this. Be sure to equip the space with cat amenities, such as food, water, litter box, and toys. You'll want to spend time with your cat, so make sure there is a comfortable place for you to sit as well.

Fill the litter box with two or three inches of litter and place it in their room where they can use it undisturbed.

Set up a feeding station with food and water bowls. Be sure to place the bowls as far from the litter box as possible.

Cats love a place to hide and get away from it all. The carrier you took them home in would be a good choice to use for their hidey hole. You can also make one by cutting a doorway in the end of a box or buy a covered cat bed at a pet supply store. They will probably feel more comfortable if they are able to see the door from this secret spot.

Cat's claws need to be worn down, and they do this by scratching on things. An appropriate outlet for them to scratch fulfills this need, protects your furniture, and provide appropriate exercise such as stretching and toning all at the same time. Some cat scratchers are made of corrugated cardboard and lie on the floor; others are posts which have to be tall enough so that the cat can extend herself upwards to scratch (you'll also want to ensure that the post is sturdy and will not wobble or fall over when she is scratching). You can encourage your cat to use the post by sprinkling it with catnip or dangling a toy at the top. Nail cap covers can be applied over a cat's nails as a humane alternative to de-clawing.

Look at your house from the perspective of your curious cat for its climbing and exploring potential. When your cat gets acclimated to your home, you may be surprised to find them on the top of the refrigerator or kitchen cabinets. Make sure there's nothing up there that can be damaged or knocked off. Look for holes or registers that leave ductwork accessible and cover them up. A kitten can easily slither into one of these.

Do some research on how to introduce your new cat to other pets.



First Day:

So you are now ready to bring home your new family member. It has been an exciting day already, so take them directly to their new room.

- Sit on the floor and let your cat come to you. Don't force them. Just let them get acquainted on their own time. If they don't approach right away, leave them alone and try again later. Give them time.
- Your newly adopted cat may not eat much or at all at first. Be sure to change their water frequently and make sure they are drinking. If your cat hasn't eaten in a few days, call the shelter or your vet to ask for advice.
- Do not introduce them to other animals on the first day.

Following Weeks:

It may take your cat a week or two to adjust. Be patient.

- Within 10 days of being adopted, take your newly adopted cat for a free wellness exam at one of the participating vet clinics. Be sure to take all of the medical records you received from EBHS with you to your appointment. It is also a good idea to take a stool sample along as well.
- As your cat adjusts, they will show signs that they want to explore outside of their safe haven. Make sure other pets and family members won't startle them while they gradually expand their territory.
- Remember to be patient.

Congratulations! If you follow these tips, you'll be on your way to having a well-adjusted feline family member. Please remember that if you have any questions about your new companion, please call Elmbrook Humane Society at (262) 782-9261.

