

Management in a Cat and Dog Household

There is a great responsibility with owning both a cat and a dog. Cats and dogs, like people, need time to get to know one another. If you prepare beforehand, take time with the introductions, and are willing to make other necessary adjustments, you are ready for an extended family! To ensure successful cohabitation between the two after a slow and gradual introduction, we recommend the following:

1. Give each animal a space of their own. Keep toys and feeding areas separate to avoid competition.
2. Keep your cat's litterboxes away from the dog. Many dogs find cat feces tasty, so be sure to keep the litterboxes in a dog proof area. You can achieve this by using cat doors or baby gates. We recommend providing your cat with multiple uncovered litterboxes in the areas that only your cat has access to.
3. Provide your cat with plenty of cat trees, perches, and shelves. Cats have an instinct to climb and be up high. Giving your cat vertical spaces plays into their natural instincts and allows them to retreat if they've had enough of the dog.
4. Spend individualized time with each animal. Make sure to give your animal some one-on-one time without the other animal. This is especially important during the introduction process, as this is a stressful time for both animals. Giving each animal consistent and predictable time alone with you helps ensure a smooth transition.
5. Use positive reinforcement training. Give your animals treats and praise when they are around each other. Never punish your animals because this can cause them to associate one another with stress and fear. Instead, redirect their attention to another activity.
6. Provide enrichment. Daily enrichment for both cats and dogs is a great way to keep them mentally stimulated and happy. There are plenty of DIY enrichment ideas online or puzzle toys can be purchased in our shelter store, online, or at your local pet store.

