



## Bringing Your New Kitty Home

Most cats are overwhelmed when they first move to a new place – this is completely normal. Remember, this kitty doesn't know you, your home, and all the sights/smells/sounds that go along with living with you! Many people may think keeping their newly adopted cat confined is "mean" or "cruel," when in fact, it's the opposite! **Giving your cat time to adjust to their new home on their terms is exactly what they need and want.**



A safe space should be set up for them with food, water, beds, toys and litterbox. An extra bathroom, spare bedroom, or office are ideal locations. Try to eliminate hard-to-reach hiding spaces such as under a bed or behind furniture, but be sure to provide your cat with hiding spaces that are easy for you to access.

You may wonder when to let the kitty out of their safe room. *Every cat is different and adjusts on their own schedule.* Do NOT rush them! Cats can live for 15-20 years, so it's worth taking the time now to help them feel comfortable. You should look for all of the following signs before allowing your kitty full access to your home:

1. Your kitty is eating, drinking, resting, grooming, and using the litterbox regularly.
2. Standing up and walking in the room does not cause them to panic and hide.
3. Your kitty is showing interest in leaving the room. Don't mistake scratching/meowing at the door as a sign they want to leave. If he runs away when the door is opened, this is a sign he's *not* ready for full access to the house just yet!

## Working with a Shy/Fearful Cat



Some cats are just more shy than others – either because of insufficient socialization as a kitten, a traumatizing event(s) or some are just naturally more shy/fearful.

Remember, this kitty has been living with us for weeks or even months, and over that timeframe, has become the kitty you met today. Taking them to your home will cause them to regress - this is normal. They will need to be given time and patience to feel comfortable in their new environment. It takes time and work to build a bond with a shy/fearful cat – but the incredibly close bond you two will have, will make it all worth it.

Tips to bring your fearful kitty out of their shell

- Provide your kitty with a "safe room" (as discussed above)
- Always talk and move slowly around the kitty
- Get down on their level and avoid towering over them
- Use food! Never underestimate the power of food to help build your bond!
- Never attempt to pull a kitty out of their hiding place; pet them gently in their hiding place
- Encourage interactive play with wand toys (never use your hands/fingers)
- Try to avoid startling your cat; if you have to do something scary (i.e. move furniture, vacuum), be sure to confine them to their safe space.
- Spend time with your kitty! Even just reading a book or playing on your phone in the kitty's safe room is a great way for them to get used to you.