

Understanding the Adopted Cat/Kitten

In the excitement of taking your new cat/kitten home, you may not be thinking of all the changes and possibilities that may await you.

YOUR NEW CAT/KITTEN'S PAST

When adopting an adult shelter cat, more often than not, little or no background is known about the animal that you choose. We can only guess at what his/her previous life was like. We do however, get to know their personalities, and most are loving, sweet companions.

SLOW ADJUSTMENT

Our cats are accustomed to having their food, water, and litter boxes within easy reach at all times. The same situation should be provided when first introducing them to your home. Adjustment to a new environment varies with each individual and placing these items too far away in the beginning can lead to stress and accidents. Start by placing everything, including your new cat/kitten, in a smaller, more enclosed area for a while. Then, slowly move the items to their permanent place. This also works best if you have other pets at home. Keeping them separated by a crate, cage or door provides them with the opportunity to become familiar with them with one another's presence and smell before actually meeting. Always be present when you do start to allow interaction, in the event of any conflicts. More often than not, pecking order is eventually established, and if they don't become fast friends, they will eventually establish a tolerance level.

DIET

Sudden changes of diet can result in some initial diarrhea, and most often this is not a serious health threat. Try sticking with what they are accustomed to, and switch slowly - adding more and more of the new food until the switch is complete. This allows their digestive system to acclimate properly to the change. If you do experience loose stools or diarrhea, a teaspoon of kapectate one or two times a day for a few days should take care of the problem. Don't hesitate to call us for advice.

BONDING

Holding, petting and first spending time with your new cat/kitten helps not only to form a bond and ease stress, but also enables them to feel more relaxed, therefore reducing or eliminating the time they spend hiding. If they do hide for a while at first, please have patience. They are probably frightened and need only love and time to feel as at home there as you do.

HEALTH

Also, respiratory infections or COLDS are common and often unavoidable in shelters, so if your cat or kitten experiences any of the symptoms (prolonged diarrhea, sneezing, dehydration, nasal discharge, runny or irritated eyes) please let us know.

You have been provided with a numbered ID tag with "Common Sense for Animals" written on it. If your new cat/kitten should become lost, this tag can trace them back to us, and enable us to trace them back to you. If you do put a collar with our tag on your cat, please be advised that breakaway collars are the best. If you do not already have a veterinarian for your new feline, we would be happy to provide this service to you. Please call Animal Health Center at 908-859-3045 to make an appointment or seek medical advice.

Good luck and we wish you so much happiness to both you and your new cat/kitten. Thank you for giving a forgotten pet a new chance, and a new place to call home.