



BRINGING HOME YOUR ADULT CAT

For easier reading, we'll call your new adoptee "Sammy". After arriving home; put Sammy into a small room - a 'safe room' - so he can familiarize himself with his new surroundings (smells, sounds, etc.). **It is not uncommon for a cat to hide when entering a new home; however, it all depends on its age, temperament, and past experiences. They will usually adapt in just a few hours, but there are those that may take days, weeks and sometimes longer. Don't be dismayed or give up; they always adjust!**

Place the carrier you brought him home in on the floor of the 'safe room' making sure that all windows, screens and adjoining doors are closed. Set his water & dry food on the floor next to the box and place his litter pan nearby, but not too close. Open the door to his carrier and quietly speak soft and quietly to him. Your tone of voice is very important.

Some cats will not hesitate to explore right away, while others may not come out for hours or longer. Some may only come out long enough to eat or relieve themselves. If you find the later one is the case, give him more time to adjust. Leave the room and then re-enter it 30 minutes later. If he wants affection at this point, you'll know it; however, don't force your affections on him if he's not ready. He'll be bugging you soon enough.

Once he responds to you, and you have no animals to introduce him to, leave the door ajar to the room. He may emerge from the room only to turn and run quickly back in. Don't be alarmed at this reaction; it is not uncommon. Allow him to explore the rest of the house in his own good time. As hard as it may be, do not let him out until he responds to you. If you let Sammy out before he has warmed to you, he may hide in a place that you're unable to access, only making it harder to bond. Spend this time making friends and gaining his trust, not coaxing him out from under a bed. It is easier to interact with him in a small area where you can actually talk to him -- all the while petting/stroking him. Be patient, don't push too hard; it takes time to build a relationship.

Feeding Instructions

Sammy will need a well-balanced, high-quality dry food. Grocery brands are often too high in potassium, magnesium & sodium -- creating heart problems or disorders of the kidneys & bladder. Find a dry food with ash content 5.5% or lower. Too much ash in the diet and not enough water can lead to cystitis (a bladder infection). Male cats are especially prone to this. Make sure the food you choose has taurine. Sammy may have a tendency to eat small meals throughout the day, so leave his dry food out to free feed. Cats are carnivores and may enjoy a diet of canned food, just don't overdue it. Many canned foods are high calorie which can encourage too much weight gain. Nutrition is very important if you want him to live a long, healthy life!

Scratchers

All cats will find and use items around our homes to scratch on if not given adequate scratching tools. They are not doing this to be destructive, but do it for a three-fold purpose: Exercise, removing old nail sheaths and marking. The key is to give them items that are "OK" to scratch. Purchasing scratchers alone or scratchers with toys on them is great. However, if they don't like the scratcher you made or purchased don't quit there. Find one they do like; it doesn't have to be elaborate. Varieties include: kitty trees, corrugated cardboard with catnip. Remember you are trying to encourage good habits, start with something inexpensive at first.

When you find him using the scratchers praise him like you would your canine friend. Positive reinforcement is everything. If he doesn't use the right item, don't scream, hit or throw things. This will only frighten or confuse him. Remember, positive reinforcement is everything. Praise, praise and more praise.

If all else fails, get a squirt bottle or squirt gun. When caught in the act - and only when caught in the act - say a loud "NO!" and give him one quick squirt to his body, not his face. You could also shake a rock or marble filled can or drop a magazine on the floor. These methods intrude on where his concentration was upsets him and he learns from repetition, that is why praise and love work so well and are the preferred method. Sooner or later he will get the hint. Remember, positive reinforcement is the key.

Carriers

Always use a hard plastic or sturdy canvas carrier to transport Sammy. A car backfiring or even a dog barking could scare him right out of your arms and into busy traffic. Some have been known to keep running, never to be seen again. Or worse. **Don't take the chance.**

Grooming

Don't bathe Sammy; it's too stressful. Most, if not all the cats adopted through our program has been treated with Advantage or Frontline. These are flea products that, after administering, kill all fleas within 6-8 hours. If you find a flea, don't panic, it will be dead shortly. Use a slicker brush to remove unwanted hair. FYI: cats will shed more when stressed. If you are feeding a high-quality food, their teeth, bones and fur will show it.

Regarding Flea Products and other chemicals in general; Read labels. Do not use products for dogs on cats. Many dog products can cause seizures, brain swelling, and affect other organs (each of these) often results in the death of the cat. Advantage, Frontline and Revolution are the safest products for cats.