



## Introductions to Other Animals



It is important that you follow all of the instructions in the package given to you by your Cat Support Network site representative. Introductions to other animals can be tricky for rescued cats or kittens. It is critical that you not rush the process and allow your adopted cat or kitten to feel comfortable in his or her "starter room" prior to attempting introductions.

Here are some helpful hints to make things easier. (For easier reading, let's call your new adoptee "Sammy", and your established pet "Heather")

**When you arrive home, place Sammy into a "safe room" for a few days (or less), so he can adjust to the new sights, smells and noises. Place his litter box in this room. His food, water and bedding should also be placed in the room. Do not let him roam free until he has used his new litter box.**

More than likely, the first introduction to Heather will be the scent you carry on your clothing or person when holding or petting Sammy.

If Heather has not noticed that you've brought Sammy into the house, give her lots of love and attention so that she does not feel neglected and abandoned. She will probably immediately notice the new scent. Talk to her normally, taking time to encourage positive responses. If she growls, barks or hisses, continue talking in a calming voice.

If Heather shows no signs of aggression, using the hard plastic carrier take Sammy out of his "safe" room and into another part of the house. Take Heather into the "safe" room and shut the door. Heather will start re-exploring the room and new scents now. Talk to her calmly, again encouraging positive reactions

While she is in the process of investigating Sammy's scent and after you have spent time with her in the room, leave the room quietly and close the door behind you. Let Sammy do some exploring of his own, making sure to avoid corners and areas that have hard to reach nooks and crannies.

It takes time for animals to become adjusted to their new surroundings; sometimes a few hours, or days, sometimes longer. Remember, they don't know you and they don't yet know their new home. Think of how you might feel.

Leave Sammy in the safe room until all signs of aggression have dissipated from Heather. It will help when Sammy smells like your house instead of the foster home he came from. Heather will like him better when he smells like she does. Once they start exhibiting curiosity, allow them to sniff one another through a small crack in the door.

Another helpful way to introduce the two would be to place Sammy into a LARGE plastic pet carrier, and place the carrier in the middle of the room with the highest traffic. This will allow the two to go nose-to-nose without the chance of either hurting the other severely.

If your new adoptee is a kitten or much smaller cat than your established animal, do not leave the two animals alone together until all interactions between the two are positive and have remained positive for some time. A large animal can easily harm a smaller cat/kitten. Use your common sense and interact with them under supervision. Don't force them together. Let them adjust to the new circumstances of their household.

**Play is an excellent way to break the ice. A laser point works miracles!**