



Adding a Second Cat into the Home

Tips to finding the right personalities and how to introduce the two

FINDING THE “RIGHT” CAT:

- Assess the personality of your cat and find a complimentary personality

Personality Trait	Your Cat	Complimentary Cat
Alpha –Who’s in charge?	Dominant	Subservient
	Subservient	Subservient same sex or dominant opposite sex
Sex & Age (* Assuming both cats are sterilized)	Female over 2 years	Male: 3 years-senior
	Female under 2 years	Male or Female: kitten-5 years
	Male any age	Male or Female: match your cat’s age within 2 years
Activity Level	High	High, medium
	Low	Low, medium
	Medium	High, medium or low

- Females, who have lived on their own for longer than 2 years, tend to be highly territorial and will probably not welcome another cat into the home. Therefore if you are getting a second cat as “company” for your cat, you may want to reconsider. If you would like to add a second cat to your home for “you”, be aware that the original cat will probably resist. She may spend the first few months hissing and growling at the new comer whenever it comes near her. For this reason it is best to add a mature, non-dominant, neutered male to the home who will not be as territorial, will not hold a grudge, who will not be afraid and at the same time will not challenge her or try to harass her into play. It is also extremely important to provide each cat with a separate litter box and separate eating dishes. Monitor food intake and output of both cats closely for the first while.
- Be kind to the senior cat! Older cats have the right to retirement when they can sleep their days away and eat when they want to. Adopting younger animals into the home may in fact hasten the senior cat’s demise from this world. Just as grandma and grandpa don’t have the energy for grandchildren all the time, so too is the senior cat. The best companion for a senior cat is another senior cat, if bringing younger animals into the home; it is imperative to spend a lot of time playing with them and not to depend on grandpa to wear out the younger cat! (Monitor food intake & output closely).
- Males who have lived on their own for longer than 3 years may very often react to new cats as the solitary female above.
- Although cats exist well in packs, they are still primarily solitary creatures. Expect any cat, regardless of sex or age, to react cautiously if not aggressively to another cat. Much of their reactions are actually a result of fear.



INTRODUCING A SECOND CAT

- Plan to keep the new arrival in a separate room with its own litter box and food dishes. This will allow the new cat to become accustomed to the sounds and smells of its new home within the safety of confinement (when cats are afraid they prefer small enclosed spaces with only one exit). This arrangement also provides the resident cat with the opportunity to get used to the smells and sound of the newcomer without having to deal with a confrontation (usually about territory) right away. In a few days, fear will usually give in to curiosity and at this point a nose-to-nose meeting will most likely be better endured by both felines. While in confinement, don't forget to start building a relationship between you and the new cat, which is easily gained through regular feedings, brushings or cuddles.
- Once you are satisfied that the two cats are comfortable, open the room to the spare room and watch from a distance. Expect some hissing and growling, perhaps even a few swats or puffed up tails. If after a while the cats are doing well together, they will probably be fine (just minor territorial disputes in the future), however if one or both cat is obviously uncomfortable, put the new cat back before an escalation can occur and repeat the procedure again later. Once you are sure no immediate aggression will happen, treats will help to make new friends!
- If a full-blown fight ensues, dumping a glass of water on the 2 will usually cause a break, then quickly scoop up the new cat (if possible in a towel or blanket) and put it back in the room. **DO NOT DISCIPLINE THE RESIDENT CAT FOR ANY AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR AND DO NOT COUDDLE EITHER CAT IN AN EFFORT TO COMFORT THEM.** Cats live by their own rules and codes, even the best behaviorist doesn't understand all their behaviors, however we do know that cats have a certain "every cat for himself" mentality in times of aggression and or fear; you can not console them, any attempt to do so will be met by aggression, therefore leave them alone until *they* seek you out. If you are concerned about possible aggression, clip both the cat's nails before their first meeting. If the first meeting between the two is violent, please contact a RESCUE Siamese Volunteer Behavior Consultant before proceeding in any further introduction of the two.
- Expect hissing and small territorial disputes for the next few months. The resident cat will need to let the new cat know what the rules are. Try not to interfere and don't show any favoritism. Chiding the resident cat and comforting/protecting the new cat will only breed jealousy between the two and in fact may promote an escalation in violent encounters.
- Remember that cats are predatory by nature. Do not trust them around fish, birds or rodents; no matter how uninterested they may appear.
- Dogs are usually quite larger than cats, but cats don't pay much attention to size when they are set on a fight. Make sure to closely supervise the two for some time to come. Do not leave them together when you are not at home. Clip the cat's nails before any encounter. Never let the dog chase the cat or mouth it in any way. Always make sure the cat has an "escape route" from the dog. Feed them in separate rooms, especially if there is any food aggression on behalf of either animal. Terriers, Huskies and Hounds are usually not suitable companions for cats as it is in their nature to chase and hunt small animals. Owners must be able to control their dogs at all times.