

Making Introductions Properly

Setting Your Cat & Dog Up for Success

We are here to help! If you have concerns with your new pet, please get in touch and we can help you navigate this introductory period.

Proper introductions are key to forming good relationships between your pets, preventing fights, and decreasing stress

When you bring a rescue home from the BVSPCA, keep in mind that we don't always know their backgrounds or histories

How to Make Proper Introductions:

- Separate your new pet in their own room for the first week. Try feeding each pet on either side of the door, and scent swapping with blankets.
- Let the new pet explore the rest of the house while the other pet is in a separate room or on a walk.
- Set up a vertical “safe space” for the cat and putting the litter box in a dog-restricted area.
- Introduce the dog on a leash to start. Allow the dog to see the cat, and reward with a “yes” and a treat each time the dog looks at the cat without reacting (barking, lunging, etc.).
- Keep sessions short, and progress to off leash only once the dog and cat are curious but not fixated on one another, and the dog is calm.

A Few Other Tips:

- The cat may hide. Give him/her time to gain confidence and decide when to face the dog. Do not force an introduction between the pets.
- **Do not leave pets together unsupervised until they have fully accepted each other and you are certain they are safe. This may take weeks or months. It will take TIME.**
- Some pets become companions, while others simply tolerate each other. The ability of pets to get along depends on their individual personalities.

