

## Adding A New Cat to Your Home

### The new home:

Consider the kind of life your companion has had. Your kitten may have been recently separated from his mother and littermates. The kitten or cat has had to cope with the transition of a kennel environment. The adult cat may have been separated from a familiar home and forced to break a bond with human companions or other animals. Now he must adjust again to totally new surroundings.

Allow your cat several weeks to adapt to his new surroundings. During this period, the cat or kitten should be carefully confined. He needs to get used to you as the provider of love, shelter and food. Be sure that all windows and doors are kept closed and that all screens are secure. A scared cat can easily get out of a high open window.

Be patient. It's not uncommon for cats to display behavior problems during the first days in a new home, but these usually disappear over time. Newly arrived cats and kittens often bolt under furniture the first chance they get; some may spend hours or even days hiding. Sit and talk quietly to the cat. If you must take the cat out of his hiding place, carry him gently to a quiet protected area where he will feel secure. Be sure food, water and litter-box are nearby.

### A room of his own:

Introduce your cat to his new home gradually, restricting him to one room at first. Isolate other animals from your new cat during this time. Supervise children; advise them to always be gentle with the cat. Have the litter-box ready and show him the location. Offer a bowl of water but do not provide food for an hour. Your cat may be bewildered, fearful or curious. Do not overwhelm him with attention or demands. Remember to keep doors and windows closed, and ensure the cat has an I.D tag on at all times. It is not unusual for cats to leap on top of very high furniture in order to explore or to feel secure. Do not panic, shout, or run to the cat. When he is ready, he will come down alone.

Try to spend several hours with your new cat, as he becomes accustomed to your home. Your sensitive handling of the initial transition can ease the trauma and set the stage for a happy settling-in.

### Sleeping arrangements

Most cats choose several favorite sleeping spots where they can be comfortable, warm and free from drafts. Providing a bed for your cat may discourage him from sleeping on furniture. A cozy box or basket lined with soft, washable bedding and placed in a quiet corner makes a suitable cat bed. However, some cats enjoy continually picking new (and sometimes surprising) sleeping spots. If you allow your cat to sleep on furniture, a washable cover can be placed over favorite spots. A cat's sleeping spot should be respected as his own. Don't allow children to disturb your cat when he is resting. Cats need solitude and quiet time.