



Settling-in Advice for your New “Forever Cat”

Thank you for adopting your new “Forever Cat” from the Genesee County Animal Shelter. The following guidelines are especially useful in helping your shy or nervous cat or kitten settle into his/her “forever home.” Please email us at info@vol4animals.org with questions, concerns and especially updates or photos of your new cat. If you call the animal shelter seeking advice, please ask for a “volunteer” to call you back. We’re always happy to help.

Confining your New Cat:

Please plan on confining your newly adopted cat to one quiet room in your home for two to four days, preferably away from children and other pets. This helps your new cat or kitten to:

- Know where the litter box is located, and avoid potential accidents.
- Learn the smells and sounds within your home in a non-threatening manner.
- Become acquainted with family members and other animals in an already established “safe place.”

Bonding with Humans:

During the settling-in period, if you feed your cat half-rations of food, he/she is very likely to bond with the humans that then *offer* food, especially really *special* food. This is a good time to introduce all children and other family members, one at a time. One of our foster moms uses what she calls “Roast Chicken Therapy” with shy cats. Chicken is ideal because it can be torn into very long thin strips and held out to the cat safely. Coax the cat closer and as he/she eats these treats, begin to pet the cat. Talking kindly to your cat reassures him/her that you’re a friend, and not to be feared. Brush the cat and get him/her used to sitting on your lap over time. Not all cats appreciate being picked up, or having their nails clipped, but they can learn to tolerate this during “roast chicken therapy.”

Introducing Other Animals:

After a few days of confinement, try introducing your new cat to other cats in the house. Allow your cat to roam out of the “quiet room” to meet the other cats. Your new cat will probably be the submissive cat during introduction, but waiting a few days gives them the advantage of already feeling that they “belong.” Don’t be alarmed if your cats don’t get along at first – they’ll sort out the natural dynamics eventually. If your new cat or kittens seems upset after a short meeting, put them back in the “quiet room” and try again the next day.

To introduce your new cat to the family dog, consider wrapping the cat or kitten tightly in a towel first. Cautiously carry the cat into a room with one dog that is ideally in a “sit” or “down” position. Hold the cat tightly in your arms and allow the animals to greet and sniff each other. The cat will inevitably hiss at the dog. Back away with the cat. The dog quickly learns the cat *means* “back off,” and the cat must be “OK” because you are holding it and speaking kindly to both animals during the introduction. A dog treat will reinforce that “nice” behavior around the cat is appreciated. Plan on repeating this procedure several times before the cat is allowed to roam free.

Free roam of the house:

- When you release your new cat into the house, be sure to provide multiple cat boxes or scoot the existing litter box in small steps to its permanent location to avoid accidents.
- Let your newly adopted cat return to his “safe place” as necessary during the adjustment phase.
- Remember that some houseplants are poisonous, so keep them out of reach.

Genesee County Animal Shelter
3841 West Main Street Road, Batavia NY
Shelter Phone 585-343-6410
www.vol4animals.org



Adoption Hours

Mon, Tues, Fri and Sun 1 pm - 3 pm
Wed 1 pm - 3 pm and 7 pm - 9 pm
Saturday 11 am - 1 pm