

# Introducing Cats



## Before you start, it's important to understand:

- Cats by nature are solitary creatures who have large territories; they are not pack animals like dogs.
- The first meeting of two cats can define how their long-term relationship goes; you often can't "do-it-over" so it's important to take precaution and do it right the first time!
- This whole process can proceed only as quickly as your cats allow, and can take weeks or even months. Signs of anxiety or aggression usually indicate that the introductions are proceeding too quickly.



## Follow these 10 simple steps for best results:

1. **Prep** your home by spraying pheromones in the areas the cats will be (Feliway).
2. **Confine** your new cat to its own room with litter, food, and fresh water.
3. **Block** the two cats with a closed door. The two cats should be able to smell and hear each other through the closed door, but there should not be any physical contact.
4. **Feed** the cats at the same time on each side of the door - at least two feet away from the door. This will mean moving your cat's food bowl to this new area for the introduction period.
5. **Play with, and reward** each cat near the closed door.
6. **Switch** the positions of the cats after two days. Allow your cat to investigate the smells in the new cat's room, while the new cat explores the house and the scent of his new playmate. Expect some hissing. Switch them back after they have had some time to explore (couple hours.) Do the switch-out every day for five more days.
7. **Crack** the door one inch and secure it with a weight. Keep up the simultaneous feeding, playing and switching.
8. **Widen** the gap to about 4 inches - but not enough for one to get through. Monitor the reactions of the cats. Stay at this stage until there is no hissing between them.
9. **Screen** the doorway where they can see one another, continuing with the simultaneous feeding, playing, switching-out routine.
10. **Introduce** them by removing the barrier, putting harnesses and leashes on them and allowing them to eat and play separately – this should be for no more than 15 minutes the first time. If that goes well, the next day, harness your cat and allow the new cat to freely explore his space and reverse that at the next meeting.

**Don't get anxious and try to short cut the process – when people have skipped the last two steps the result is almost always failure.**

For more information, visit: [www.CatBehavior.Solutions](http://www.CatBehavior.Solutions)