

Adding a feline to your home

Imagine moving into a new home with complete strangers. It'd be pretty weird, maybe even a little scary. You'd probably want to hide or run away back to your old home at first. This is how a cat feels when being adopted and introduced to a new home. However, to be able to give a home to a cat who needs one is so important and rewarding. With a little preparation and forethought, your new feline friend will treat you like family and feel at home in no time.

Adopting a Kitten

If you want to adopt a kitten, it is important to know that there is more than how cute they are. Kittens are very much like babies and need a lot of care. They require a lot of your time and energy. A kitten will need to be trained to use the litter box, food and water bowls, and your home will more than likely need some kitten proofing. Kittens are naturally playful and curious. In other words, they make messes.

To become a well-behaved and happy cat, kittens will need socialization. Unless you want an aloof and reclusive cat, or one that is desperate for attention, it's probably not a great idea to adopt a single kitten and leave it alone while you go to work all day. In order to prevent loneliness, and the bad behavior that often accompanies a single kitten, many places will encourage you to adopt two kittens. Furthermore, training is often easier with two kittens because they learn from each other. One learns from the other's mistakes and rewarded behavior.

Of course, kittens need human interaction as well. Playing with your cat and introducing him or her to new people and situations is key to socialization. This takes a lot of time and energy. Even though they are little, kittens can be quite rough with others. In order to prevent bites or scratches, you should always use toys when playing with your kitten. Kittens are fast and their little claws are extremely sharp! Their nails can cut through your skin like a sharp knife. You must take this into consideration if deciding on a kitten. They need to be taught not to climb curtains, bed covers, people's legs! And so much more. If you are not up to this task, you may want to consider adopting an adult or senior cat.

Adopting an Adult or Older Cat

While you may be totally smitten with a kitten, you shouldn't overlook older cats. For a person or family that is looking for a laid-back pet that doesn't require your undivided attention, adopting a cat is the way to go. Adult cats are independent and far better equipped to be on their own than a kitten. Because they have matured and have experienced more, adult cats won't get into as much trouble as kittens and require less supervision. In other words, you can go to work

and return to undamaged curtains and furniture. An adult cat is also a better choice for if you have kids and other pets.

Adult cats are better with children and other furry friends for several reasons. For one, adult cats don't have as much energy as kittens. Furthermore, they probably have a good sense of boundaries. Think of kittens as mischievous little fur balls with no manners. If they're picked up and don't want to be held, they will use their claws to get away. Plus, they constantly want to play, which can also involve sharp little claws and biting. While it is totally unintentional, there is a good chance your child will be on the receiving end of this. Same goes for any pets you may have.

Your pet will be seen as a playmate by your kitten and will be on the receiving end of its high energy and naughty behavior. In order to prevent your child and pet from being terrorized, it's probably best to bring home an adult cat. Because "many adult cats end up in shelters after having been an indoor pet for several years only to be given up after a baby is born, the family moves or someone develops an allergy to the cat," they are probably used to living with other animals and family members of different ages (Michelson Found Animals, 2018). In other words, these cats have established good habits and behavior.

Bringing Your New Cat Home

Whether you decide to adopt a cat or a kitten, your new pet will need some time to adjust. In order to make the adjustment period as easy as possible, you should set up a certain area or room with food, water, and a litterbox. This room should be just for the cat, a place where he or she can rest without being disturbed by other pets or family members. While the length of the adjustment period will vary for every cat, kittens should spend the night in the room for the first few months. This will keep them out of trouble while you are sleeping or out. With your adult cat, you will see signs that they want to leave the room and do some exploring. However, instead of letting them have free range of the house, you should introduce them to new areas and increase time for them to roam around gradually.

It's important to note that before you adopt a kitten or cat, you should consider your lifestyle and how much time and energy a new cat or kitten requires. Cats can have a life expectancy of 15 to 20 years, making this a big commitment. However, it's a commitment you won't regret as you'll be gaining a great new friend and family member.