

Bringing Home Your New Cat

Be Patient!

Your new cat is experiencing many changes all at once and we cannot be certain how your new pet was treated before it arrived at our shelter. To set your new cat and your family up for success, you must **slowly** help him/her acclimate to his/her new surroundings. A scared cat's options are "fight or flight". Wait and allow your new cat to interact with you and your family when s/he is ready. Cats tend to hide when scared; remember to respect their space. If your cat has chosen to hide in a spot that feels safe, s/he will come when ready. You can try to encourage your new pet to come out by providing a different hiding spot, such as a covered bed, in an area that is more accessible to you, or by offering treats.

Avoid Overwhelming Situations

For at least two weeks DO NOT:

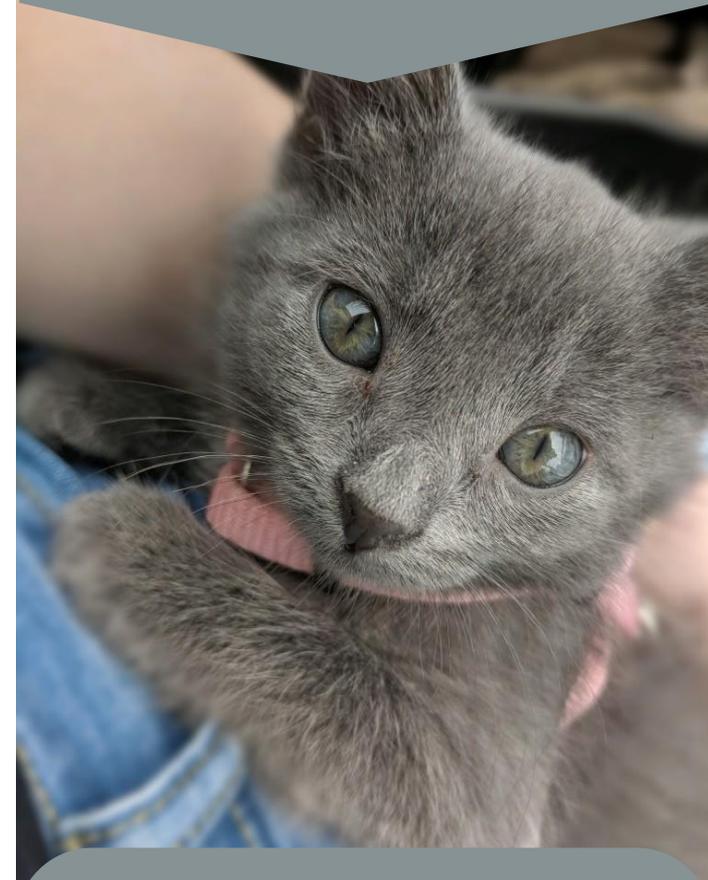
- ▶ Try to integrate your new cat with existing household pets (see *Bringing a New Cat Home to Live With an Existing Cat* brochure)
- ▶ Bring your new cat to visit other family members/friends or invite many people over to meet him/her
- ▶ Take your new cat to the pet store or other public places
- ▶ Take your new cat for unnecessary car rides

** Anne Arundel County Animal Care & Control does require you to take your pet to see your veterinarian within 5 days of adoption for a well veterinary visit*



Protect your family
Protect your pets
Protect your community
Be a responsible pet owner

411 Maxwell Frye Road
Millersville, MD 21108
410-222-8900
www.aacounty.org/pets
Facebook: @AACAnimalCareControl
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Confine Your Cat

Your first goal as your cat's new owner is getting him/her comfortable with you and your immediate family.

First Two Weeks:

Your cat should spend the first two weeks in a quiet, small room such as a bathroom or spare bedroom. Cats tend to get overwhelmed and stressed easily when their environment changes.

Provide:

- ▶ Soft, Comfortable Bedding
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Water
- ▶ Litterbox
- ▶ Toys

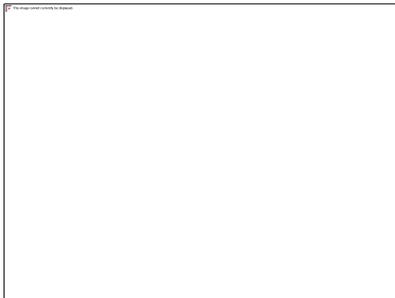
Family members should take turns going in to visit your new cat either individually or in pairs.

Children should always be supervised.

After Two Weeks:

If, after the initial two weeks, your cat is comfortable in the small room, you can consider letting him/her explore other areas of the home for short periods of time and under close supervision.

Confine any other pets away from your new cat while s/he explores.



Litter Box

Change and stressful situations, as well as medical issues, can sometimes cause previously trained cats to eliminate outside of the litter box. If the cat you have adopted is not using the litter box properly, **be patient**, there are a few things that could be causing the issue:

- ▶ A shortage of litter boxes: If you have more than one cat you should have one litter box per cat plus one
- ▶ Litter box cleanliness, size or type of litter
- ▶ Litter box is not in a comfortable location for your cat or is not easily accessible

Always make sure your veterinarian is aware of issues with the litter box as it can also be a sign of medical conditions

Keep Your Cat Indoors

The safest place for your cat is inside your home. Cats face a variety of dangers if allowed outdoors. They may get severely/deadly injured or lost.

If you would like, at some point, to allow your cat to go on **supervised** trips outdoors (after s/he is fully acclimated to your home/family), remember the leash law in Anne Arundel County applies to cats as well as dogs.

Meeting New People

After a few weeks with your family, you can slowly start to introduce your cat to new people, one person at a time. All introductions should be done in a calm, quiet, and safe setting.

Always let the cat approach a new person; never allow the person to approach the cat. This may make the cat feel cornered.

Closely watch your cat's behavior and allow him/her to retreat from any situation where s/he exhibits signs of stress, particularly signs of either "fight" (hissing, ears pinned back, swatting) or "flight" (attempting to dart or hide from something/someone). Do not attempt to pick up or move the cat when s/he is trying to escape from an overwhelming situation.

Show **both** children and adults how to be respectful of your new cat, and teach your cat how to respect people.

Children should never be left unattended with an animal.