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Introducing New Feline Friends to your House

Adding a new furry feline to the household can be smooth or problematic. At worst the cats may become aggressive toward each other and/or have elimination problems. It is impossible to prevent all problems but the steps below should help to minimize them.

- Prior to bringing the new cat home – add a litter box, close off the area that you wish to place the new cat in, add more perches/cat trees.
- The new cat should have a separate room/area with its own food, water, litter box and resting/hiding places. This should be a completely separate room that has a solid door that latches well. It may take up to 3-7 days for the new cat to get acquainted to the room and feel comfortable with its new environment.
 - During this time people of the household need to make sure to give plenty of attention to the new cat even though they are confined to a separate room.
 - The resident cat of the household will be able to smell the new cats scent through the door and get acquainted with its voice.
- Attach some sort of dangling toy to the new cats door so that it encourages them to go to the door for play and this may stimulate the cats to play together at the barrier.
- Using a towel/rag/glove rub the new cats cheek or tail base and allow the resident cat to sniff the smell, and vice versa.
 - If at any point there is an aversion to the smell or hissing, the cats are not ready to meet. If the cats react positively then they may be ready to meet.
- Prior to introducing the cats to each other it is best to allow each other to investigate the area where they have been staying without the other cat in the area. (IE: Allow the new cat to roam the resident cat's area, place the resident cat in the new cat's area/room at this time). This should be done several times until there is no hissing and each seems fairly comfortable.
- Once both cats seem fairly comfortable with each other's scent then you can move to allowing them to see each other visually. The cats should each be contained somehow – leash and harness, crates, behind doors with windows. During this introduction try to offer treats to each cat to make them comfortable. Do this 2-3 times daily until there is no aggression noted.
- Next the cats should be supervised and allowed to play together, during this play time make sure to have either water squirt bottles, large blankets to cover cats in case they become aggressive to each other.
 - If the cats become aggressive toward each other NEVER try to handle them as they will redirect their aggression at you!
- As long as the cats are interacting well things can progress for longer periods of time and you can start to decrease the amount of human supervision necessary.
- IF AT any time a fight arises or a problem you should start back at the beginning and go through the steps again.