



## **Tips on introducing your new kitten to your current cat**

Bringing a new kitten into the household is a special and exciting time for all the family... except potentially for your current cat! Cats are instinctively territorial, however, with a little forward planning, and a calm approach you can help make the process of introduction relatively stress-free.

*Make sure any new cat or kitten coming into the household is examined by a vet and tested for FELV and FIV prior to coming in contact with any cat.*

### **Plan Ahead**

- If possible, before your new kitten comes home, take a new toy, or blanket and rub some of your new kitten's scent onto it. Then, leave this lying around at home for your existing cat to become familiar with. This may help your cat recognize the scent as something non-threatening.
- Prepare a separate room (maybe a spare bedroom, or the utility room) for the new kitten to occupy for the first few days. Make sure it has its own water bowl, food bowl, toys, and bedding.

### **Bringing the kitten home**

- When you bring your new kitten home, keep your current cat apart in another room. Give the kitten a quick tour of its new home and then settle it into its own room.
- Once settled, you can now let your existing cat out of its room. Let it smell your hands covered in the scent of the new kitten and give treats to comfort it. The whole idea with this is “new smell = good things happen”.
- Gradually introduce the kitten's scent into the household over the first few days, swapping food bowls and bedding. Sniffing and hearing each other through the door.
- As soon as they are both comfortable with each other's scent, (about 3 days), keeping them separate, allow each to explore the other territory

### **Meeting each other**

- The best time to make the formal introduction is at mealtime, when the desire for food will overcome all other distractions.
- Expect some growling and hissing - this is a normal part of them establishing their individual places within the hierarchy. Be ready with a blanket to separate them just in case a full-scale fight develops. But hopefully, your careful preparations will mean that by this stage, they 'recognize' each other sufficiently to co-exist for a few minutes over dinner.
- Immediately after that first mealtime together, separate them and keep them apart until the next mealtime, gradually increasing the time they spend together.
- Share treats, affection, and attention between them equally during their time together, not only to build positive associations but also to demonstrate that there is no favoritism.