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— QUICK GUIDE TO —

# How to Prepare Your Pack or Pride for a New Furry Member



Welcoming a New Pet

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Adding a new pet to the family is filled with important firsts, essential bonding experiences, and memories for you and your cherished pal. These also can significantly impact how Sally or Snickers remembers, relates, and reacts to the world around them—so it's important to make sure you're introducing them the right way!

**In this guide, we'll present some practical tips to make sure you and your BFF are making the most of all of your important firsts.**



# 01 Introducing Their Environment

When introducing Buddy or Bitsy to their new living space, don't rush! They shouldn't have free reign of the entire apartment or house from the moment they step in the door! Allow them to explore one room at a time and gradually expand their access—this is where gates and crates come in handy! No matter your pet's age, it's important to supervise their exploration phase closely.



**For dogs, this will help avoid accidents in the house and alert you to anything that triggers timid or reactive behaviors.**



**For cats, it will ensure they don't get their paws into anything dangerous and help you spot potential hiding places. It's also a great bonding experience that builds trust!**

## 02 Introducing the Family

There are several steps you can take to make sure your pet has a paw-sitive experience meeting new people<sup>1</sup>:

- **Make sure you and your family members are wearing clean clothes** to avoid confusing scents.
- **Let your new pet sniff new people through a door, window, or gate before meeting them** so they won't feel trapped or cornered.
- **Avoid sudden movements when initially greeting an animal.** Instead, get low, stay calm, let them come to you, and offer treats if needed!



**Spend time letting your pet get to know the people living in your home before introducing anyone new.**

# 03 Introducing the Pack or Pride

## Cat-to-Cat<sup>2</sup>

1

**During the first day or two, keep both cats separate.** Place food, water, a litter box, a scratch pad, and toys in a separate room for the new cat. Keep the door closed so your other cat can't enter.

2

**Get the cats used to each other's smell** by allowing each sniff your hands and clothing after you've interacted with the other. You can also rub a towel or blanket over one cat, then place it on the floor for the other to explore and play with.

3

**Open the door an inch and allow the cats to peer through and see each other.** As long as they remain calm, allow the cats to sniff and see each other for short sessions, multiple times a day. If they hiss or growl return to the previous step.

4

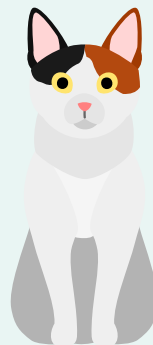
When the cats can remain consistently calm while seeing each other, open the door and put up a pet gate so the cats can see more of each other without physical contact. **Allow them to play on either side of the gate.**

**Keep in mind:** Some hissing and posturing can be normal as cats become more comfortable, even after a successful first few days or weeks. Don't panic!

5

If parallel play through the pet gate goes well, **let the cats interact face-to-face in the same room** for 5 to 10-minute sessions, three to five times daily. If one of the cats appears overwhelmed or fearful, shorten the interactions. After several days of this, try letting the cats spend time together without you.

**For more step-by-step details on introducing your feline friends, [check out this article](#) on Chewy.com.**



# Dog-to-Dog<sup>3</sup>

1

**Introduce the pups in a neutral area** to will help avoid territorial behaviors. If this isn't possible, do outdoor introductions before bringing the dogs inside together.

2

**Help both dogs associate each other with positive experiences and rewards** by using a calm, happy voice. Avoid punishing either for getting too excited, barking, or whining.

3

**Supervise off-leash playtime** and give them breaks from each other. Separate them when you're not there until they are comfortable with each other under various circumstances.

**Keep in mind:** Some posturing and mild aggression can be normal as dogs become more comfortable, even after a successful first few days or weeks. Don't panic!

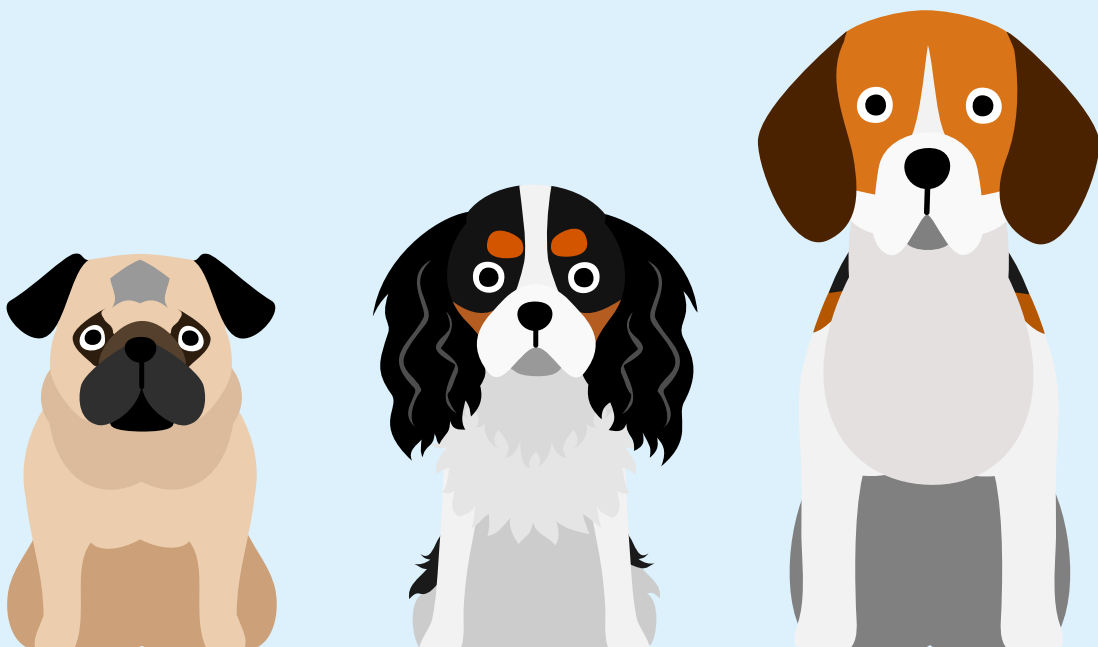


4

**Know it's ok to take a step back for a few days.**

It can take this long for a dog's stress hormones to return to normal, and any altercations could get worse if you try to re-introduce them too soon.

**For more step-by-step details on introducing your canine companions, [check out this article](#) by the Animal Humane Society.**



# Cat-to-Dog & Dog-to-Cat<sup>4</sup>

1

**Create a sanctuary for each pet.** Include essentials for each pet—like a litter box, scratching post, water and food bowls, crate, blankets, and toys—in their given space.

2

**Keep the pets separate for at least 3-4 days to make sure pets are clear of illness.** This also allows them to get used to each other's presence without face-to-face contact.

3

**Feed them on opposite sides of a closed door** to teach them to associate each other's presence with pleasant things, such as food.

4

Once your pets can eat their food calmly next to the door, **conduct several meet-and-greets in a common area of the house.** Keep the dog on a leash and let the cat come and go.

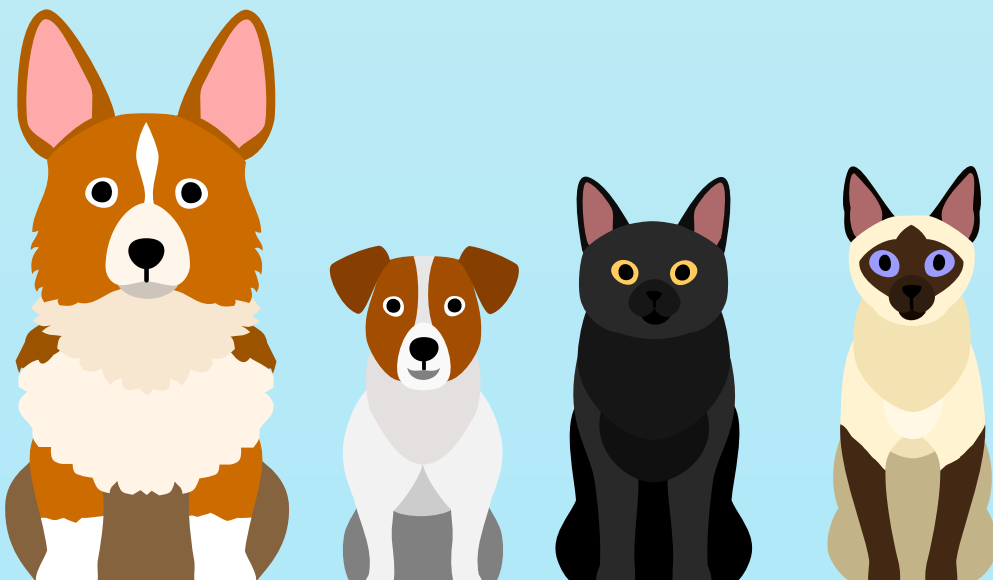
5

**Repeat these face-to-face sessions daily.** Save your pets' favorite treats for when they are together and try to end each session before either pet shows stress or aggression.

6

When the animals appear to get along well, **let them loose in the room together—while supervised!** If tension erupts, return to the earlier introduction steps and repeat the process.

**For more step-by-step details on successful cross-species introductions, [check out this article](#) by the Animal Humane Society.**



04

## A Partner for Your Pet Ownership Journey

First impressions last a lifetime, so we know how important it is to you that you make a good one on your new pet! But assisting you with acing important firsts with your fur baby isn't the only way we help with pet ownership.

Our **Pet Hero** plan aims to provide pet parents with affordable access to all the health and safety essentials without forgetting to prioritize the ability to pamper their pet, too. A subscription-based benefits package, **Pet Hero** provides you and your BFF with a suite of practical benefits made with real pet lovers like you in mind. And if you're a multi-pet household, you can cover your entire pack or pride for under **\$20 a month**, with no added fees or restrictions based on age, breed, or size, and no deductibles.

Learn more at [www.myrealbenefits.com](http://www.myrealbenefits.com)



**Pet** Hero

1. <https://www.petcarerx.com/article/how-to-introduce-your-pets-to-new-places-and-family-members/6177>
2. [https://be.chewy.com/can-socialize-cat-tips-introducing-cats/?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=14076094048&utm\\_content=124785787629&gclid=Cj0KCQjwz8emBhDrARIsANNJjS6BCki8kJgOlwdYXz4AgegFsdQxlmLCCfqzJNum3p8HKXskuMf8n4aArXtEALw\\_wcB](https://be.chewy.com/can-socialize-cat-tips-introducing-cats/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=14076094048&utm_content=124785787629&gclid=Cj0KCQjwz8emBhDrARIsANNJjS6BCki8kJgOlwdYXz4AgegFsdQxlmLCCfqzJNum3p8HKXskuMf8n4aArXtEALw_wcB)
3. <https://www.animalhumanesociety.org/resource/how-successfully-introduce-two-dogs>
4. <https://www.animalhumanesociety.org/resource/how-introduce-dog-and-cat>

\* This is not insurance.

- \*\* Emergency Pet Medical Reimbursement coverage is underwritten by American Bankers Insurance Company of Florida (home office Miami, FL) and is subject to all terms, conditions and limitations, including limitations on amount of coverage, set forth in the policy documents.
- Only 1 Emergency Pet Medical reimbursement benefit paid per claim occurrence and only 2 claims per 12 month period.

Coverages are subject to terms, conditions and exclusions. Some state exclusions apply.

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