



### Guide to Cat Introductions

The key to successful cat introductions is TIME. Cats need time to become acclimated to each other and the idea of another cat in their space. The most overwhelming aspect of meeting a new cat is usually VISUAL. This means the cats should not actually see each other for SEVERAL WEEKS after the new cat is brought home.

*Follow these tips to help set your cats up for success:*

1. Keep the cats separated with a closed door. It is most ideal to keep the new cat in a room and give the resident cat the rest of the home in the beginning. The new cat will be overwhelmed with new sights and smells, so only having one room to explore can help decrease stress.
2. Feed the cats at the same time on either side of the door.
  - a. Start with the food bowls a couple feet away from the door.
  - b. Each day, move the food just a little closer to the closed door.
    - i. Keep in mind that if the cats don't seem to care and keep eating their food normally, this is exactly what you want! Continue going slow.
    - ii. Continue this until both cats are comfortably eating their food right next to either side of the closed door.
3. During this time, scent swapping can be helpful.
  - a. Trade which cat is in the room and which cat has the rest of the home.
  - b. You can also rub each cat with a towel and then give the scented towel to the other cat.
4. The next step will be to allow the cats to see each other without having access to each other.
  - i. This can be accomplished by setting up a baby gate.
  - ii. You can also tie a door open so it only opens a crack.
5. Once the cats can see each other, go back to feeding them several feet away from the door.
  - a. Each day, move the food just a little closer to the doorway.
    - i. Keep in mind that if the cats don't seem to care and keep eating their food normally, this is exactly what you want! Continue going slow.
    - ii. Continue this until both cats are comfortably eating their food right next to either side of the doorway.
6. Once the cats are eating comfortably where they can see each other, they can then have access to each other.
7. It is essential to ensure that the cats have escape routes so they can easily get away from the other cat if they wish.

If you have tried what is provided here and still have questions, contact [larimerbehaviorhelp@nocohumane.org](mailto:larimerbehaviorhelp@nocohumane.org) or call 970-226-3647 ext. 5130