

*Integrative Veterinary Care*  
Introducing a new pet into the family  
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If you plan to introduce a new pet into the family it is important to consider the impact this will have on your current feline population. Your new addition should be confined to a smaller area when you are not present and if possible your current residents' routine should not be affected.

When we bring home a new family member of the fluffy persuasion we keep them in a bedroom with a screen door. This method keeps the new member safe and allows everyone else a peek. Sometimes there's some yelling, hissing, spitting etc. that goes on through the screen door but we merely wait for the upset to subside before introducing them without the safety of the barrier. (Always monitored by us of course) This option also allows the new addition to become accustomed to their surroundings.

If we bring a new dog into the situation this method allows our cats the freedom to move about the house without fear of being chased. It also allows us time to work with our new friend on proper cat handling etiquette. Don't be in a hurry to change this. Your cats will let you know when the newest member has been accepted. Sometimes it happens quite quickly and at other times not.

You can also use stacked baby gates in lieu of a screen door. If the new member is a cat coming into a dog household you can use stacked baby gates initially and once everyone has become more accustomed to each other you can then switch to placing a single baby gate that will allow kitty to get in and out (either over or under the baby gate) of the room without the dogs following

Remember, while we may think it's our house, our cats know better.