

## Introducing your new cat to the home:

The re-homing process can be stressful for yourself, your new cat and any current pets already living in the home. So to make the transition a little easier, here are some ideas you might want to apply:

- ➔ Cats communicate through scent, so it's important to give the cat plenty of areas to spread their scent through touch, such as blankets, beds and scratching post. This will help them to feel more comfortable in their new home. You might also want to make use of catnip, pheromone diffusers or spray in order to encourage the cat to do so.
  - One for each cat plus one
- ➔ Take your time introducing your new cat to any existing pets in the home. Keep the interactions controlled and reward any positive interactions with attention or treats. When introducing cats to each other, it will be helpful to first introduce them through scent by swapping bedding and toys around, then introducing them through a closed/ screened door while rewarding them both with food, before introducing them face-to-face.
- ➔ If there are multiple cats in the home, make sure you have multiple feeding stations, litter boxes and scent soakers such as beds and scratching post around the house in order to eliminate territorial stress and make everyone feel as comfortable as possible.
- ➔ Space heals everything. Make sure everyone has enough space to themselves so that they may retreat if they feel the need. Introducing things like cat shelves might also help eliminate territorial stress and avoid conflicts.
- ➔ Stick to what they know at first. Too many changes at once may cause the cat's stress levels to increase. Where possible, start by using the same litter, food and bedding that the cat is accustomed to and slowly wean them off to make the transition easier for them.
- ➔ The amount of time your new cat should be kept indoors is not set in stone, although a minimum of 2 weeks is usually recommended. Ultimately, this will depend on the individual. Once the cat has started to explore the home and make use of the scent soakers provided around the house, it is a good indication that the cat feels comfortable enough to be allowed outside (Please note, it is only recommended to let your cat out after sterilisation and vaccination). If you want to go a step further to help your cat feel more comfortable outside of the home, litter box excretions can be placed around the yard. This might sound crazy, but this will help your cat to establish a home range and let all the neighbouring cats know a new cat has arrived, helping to eliminate territorial stress.
- ➔ Play stimulates a cat's predatory motor pattern, which helps release Dopamine in the brain and makes them feel satisfied. By introducing interactive play, you will help your cat to gain confidence and build a stronger relationship with you.