

Adult Cat Adoption: What To Know

1. The "Three-Three-Three" Rule

Adult cats generally take longer to adjust to a new environment than kittens do.

- **3 Days:** In the first three days, your cat may feel overwhelmed and hide under a bed or in a closet. Don't take this personally; they are simply decompressing.
- **3 Weeks:** After three weeks, they start to settle into your routine and feel comfortable enough to explore the whole house.
- **3 Months:** At three months, most cats feel completely at home and their true "quirks" and affectionate side will fully emerge.

2. Established Personalities

What you see is usually what you get. With a kitten, you don't know if they will grow up to be a "lap cat" or an independent loner.

- **Ask the Shelter/Rescue:** They can tell you if the cat is vocal, good with dogs, or prefers a quiet home.
- **Energy Levels:** Adult cats are much more likely to match your energy. If you want a Netflix buddy, look for a "couch potato" senior. If you want a playmate, look for a young adult (1–3 years old).

3. The "Base Camp" Approach

Don't give an adult cat free reign of the house immediately. This can be intimidating.

- **Start in one room:** Set up a spare bedroom or office with their litter box, food, and water.
- **Safe hiding spots:** Provide a cardboard box or a cat cave. Knowing they have a "fortress" helps lower their cortisol levels.
- **Let them come to you:** Avoid picking them up or forcing cuddles for the first few days. Let them initiate contact.

4. Health and Maintenance

- **Dental Health:** This is the most common health issue for adult cats. Check if the rescue has done a dental cleaning recently.
- **Diet:** Many adult cats have specific preferences or sensitive stomachs. Try to find out what they were eating at the shelter to avoid sudden digestive upset.

- **Grooming:** While cats are self-cleaning, older cats may need help with brushing, especially long-haired breeds or seniors who may have a bit of arthritis.