



Kneading Kitty's Rescue

Bringing Kitty Home

An answer guide to your most purrplexing kitty questions

We adopted a cat today. How do we help him adjust to our family? Provide your new cat with a quiet, safe place to spend the next few days, preferably a bedroom that doesn't get a lot of traffic. Set up a litter box, food/water dishes near the cat carrier. Leave the cat in the carrier for about a ½ hour. After things have calmed down, open the carrier door, but do not force the cat to come out. He may run and hide or not come out at all. Give him time. Forcing attention on a cat that doesn't want attention will not only stress him out but could get you scratched or bitten. Give your new cat plenty of time to explore this room without any distractions (children or other pets). Keep in mind some cats are ready for instant family attention and some are not. Cats can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks to adjust completely. Over the next few days, introduce members of the family slowly and only for short periods of time. If your cat seems agitated, leave him alone to calm down. Allow your cat to explore safe areas of the house with supervision until you and your cat are comfortable with the new living arrangement.

We adopted a new cat this weekend. Is it too soon to introduce her to the family dog or cat? Yes, it is too soon. The cat should be acclimated to the family and environment before you add a dog or cat to the equation. **Please read our handout "Introducing New Kitty to your Resident Cat or Dog"**. If you did not receive it in your adoption packet, please go to our website: <https://kneadingkittysrescueaz.com/adopter-resources>

We have had our cat for about a week and she has stopped using the litter box. Is there a problem? There are several reasons that would cause a cat to stop using the litter box: stress, illness, or confusion. Consider the location of the litter box, the type of litter, the amount of litter in the box, and the cleanliness of the box. To some cats, location is very important. The litter box should be kept in a spot that affords your cat some privacy yet is conveniently located for cleaning purposes. When it comes to litter, if kitty was on **Dr. Elsey's Precious Cat Litter** and you switched to another type of litter, kitty may be confused. Try mixing litters, adding a little more of your brand and less of kitty's original brand each time. Urine and feces should be scooped out at least once a day and litter should be dumped weekly depending on the number of cats in your household. As a rule, you should have one box per cat. If kitty is still urinating out of the box, try secluding kitty to a small area such as a bathroom. Give her a clean litter box, her food/water bowls and a comfy bed. She should stay in the bathroom for a week after she starts using the box again. Her potty problems might also be a space issue. She may be too scared to go all the way across the living room to the laundry room to use her box. Try adding a box near where she hides out during the day. If issues continue, you will want to make sure your kitty is not ill. A UTI (urinary tract infection) can cause kitty to stop using the box and start using the floor. Think of it as kitty telling you "I don't feel good and I need your help". Symptoms of a UTI include frequent trips to the box resulting in little or no urine, blood in the urine, or howling while attempting to urinate.

Why is our cat clawing the furniture and how can we stop this behavior? Your cat's desire to scratch is a hard-wired instinct not a behavioral problem. Claws are in-disposable feline tools. Cats use them to hunt, play, groom, exercise, mark territory and defend themselves. Scratching feels good and is impossible to prevent! Redirect your cat's natural need to scratch by offering alternatives. Cardboard scratchers are cheap and refillable and cats love them. Adding a little catnip won't hurt. When you notice kitty scratching on the couch, say NO and put her where she can scratch. You may also spray the kitty with a water bottle while saying NO. Praise kitty for using her scratching place and not your couch. Yelling or spanking your cat may only cause your cat to do naughty things on purpose. Double sided-tape is a great way to protect the corners of your couch. Colorful pipe cleaners twisted up make great toys and provide hours of amusement. Paper bags from the store are also a thrill for your kitty. Keeping your cat busy with toys will lessen her need to claw your furniture and save you a lot of grief. Cat trees with built in scratchers are great for your kitty too.