

## Introducing A New Pet Into Your Home

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It is an exciting time when you introduce a new furry friend into your home. When going to get your new pet, it is best to leave your current pet at home. Car travel can cause stress to your current pet as well as the new pet. Forcing the two to interact so suddenly in this stressful environment can cause or worsen anxiety and can potentially cause fighting.

For introductions, take two dogs to a neutral territory. Examples include a park, while on a walk, or in a friend's yard. Always make sure there is someone there to help hold one of the dogs. That way if one does show aggression or anxiety, you both can grab one pet each. Do not force the dogs to sniff or go around each other if they appear anxious. For both dogs and cats, allowing them to take their time, sniffing and watching each other at their own pace, will help prevent issues. If one seems to be reluctant or aggressive, telling them "No" or separating them for some time will help before trying again later. When good behavior is happening, using a praising or encouraging voice to reassure them that they are doing well.

Once both pets are home, separating food dishes, water bowls, beds, litter pans for cats, and toys can help with territorial issues. For dogs, it can be helpful to have all toys put away initially and only given to both pets if they are kept separate to prevent a fight over a toy. Only allow them to have toys in the same room if they are getting along well, and showing progress.

Giving both pets equal love and attention helps to reassure them that this new companion is an acceptable addition to the family.

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