



INTRODUCING DOGS AND CATS

Have a safe room or rooms as well as high places where Fluffy the cat can access, but prevents Fido the dog from reaching Fluffy. Baby-gates, cat doors and clearing high surfaces are good ideas. It's important Fluffy can retreat to regroup and relax away from Fido and then venture forward into dog territory at his own pace. Fluffy should have access to food, water and litter in this area so no interactions with Fido are forced.

Never force either animal into proximity with the other by holding or caging either, or otherwise restricting their desire to escape.

For the first introduction, have Fido on leash. If it seems to be going well, take the leash off and supervise closely.

If Fido is behaving in a friendly and/or cautious way, try to not intervene in their interactions, except to praise and reward Fido for her good manners.

Interrupt any intense chasing and try to redirect Fido's attention to another activity. This can be very difficult and in the future Fido may need to be leashed until a routine is worked out or the house divided into cat and dog sections.

In the first few weeks, observe the trend: Are things getting better or worse? Monitor interactions until there is a pattern or plateau in their relationship.

If Fido is the newcomer, be sure to give plenty of extra attention to Fluffy.

Fido should not have access to the cat litter box or food bowls. It's too stressful for Fluffy when Fido eats cat feces, litter or Fluffy's food. These items should be placed in the cat's safe room or out of Fido's reach.