If you've just brought home your new cat, there are now millions of things for them to explore – from your furniture to your friends. Taking the steps to properly socialize them to their new home helps them have a stress-free experience. Common experiences like trips to the veterinarian, leaving them with a pet sitter, and introducing new members to the family will go much more smoothly if you take the time to properly socialize your cat. Here are a few ways to do just that.

**The basics of cat socialization**

To prepare your cat for socialization, follow these quick tips:

- **Invest in treats and toys.** What better way to introduce your cat to their new world than with their favorite toys?
- **Start right away.** The sooner you begin socialization, the better your cat will feel about their new life adventure.
- **Make socializing fun.** Plenty of playtime (during and after your sessions) shows them you care.
- **Keep sessions short so you don’t lose their attention.** Several brief sessions every day are more effective than one long one.

**Introduce your cat to new sights and experiences**

The more you can safely and appropriately expose your cat to early in their life, the better adjusted — and happier — they will be. Don’t do too much at once. Go slowly and provide lots of petting, cuddles, play, and treats. Introduce them to:

- Being pet and held
- Getting brushed
• Toys and interactive feeders
• Scratching posts
• Litter boxes
• Visitors
• Other pets in your home (when the time is right)
• Cat carrier and, eventually, riding in the car

Get them used to common sounds

Cats can be easily startled by new noises. Try introducing these common noises in a gradual and controlled way — at lower volumes and farther distances with lots of positive reinforcement and treats in an environment where they feel safe. This way, your cat won’t be as stressed by them in their daily life.

• Door knocks and doorbell rings (especially if you have frequent guests)
• Noisy appliances, such as a hair dryer, blender, vacuum, or washing machine
• Phones and alarm clocks (do them a favor and turn down the volume a few notches if possible)
• Garbage and delivery trucks, buses, and motorcycles
• Car horns and sirens
• Boisterous family members
• Thunder and fireworks

Once your cat’s all about your home, keep introducing them to new things. After all, socialization is a lifelong adventure.

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