



Guide to Meeting a Resident Dog

Cats and dogs can and often do get on well. They generally have different agendas and priorities, and so do not compete for the same resources. It may be natural for either to show a little wariness initially. Careful planning following a slow and positive stepwise plan can result in calm acceptance of each other, or even friendships! If the dog has happily lived with cats before it may make the introduction process easier. Similarly, a kitten that has been reared around dogs, and found their company to be a positive experience, is much more likely to be curious than fearful of a dog in its new home. However, if you have a dog that has experience of herding or chasing, such as a working sheep dog, some terrier breeds, or an ex-racing greyhound, then it may be much more driven than other breeds by its instincts and previous experiences to herd or chase. In all cases, care should be taken during introductions.

- Forty-eight hours before bringing your kitten home, plug an Adaptil pheromone diffuser (adaptil.com) in the space where your dog normally lives.
- The plan should follow the same structure and steps as cat introductions (pages 11–13). It is important to progress slowly, positively, and ensure that both the dog and the kitten are calm and relaxed at all times.
- As with cat-to-cat introductions, before any physical introductions, introduce each animal to the other's scent. This can be carried out by swapping bedding and by stroking both animals with a cotton glove on and leaving the scent catcare4life.org around for the other to encounter or allowing the other to smell the glove, prior to meeting each other. Reaction to the scent will give you an indication of how each animal might react to the other, as well as giving them a chance to become accustomed to the smell of the other before actually physically meeting.
- Make sure the kitten has lots of places to escape to. Adult cats can jump up onto furniture or windowsills, but kittens will need steps up to safe places using cushions or stools. Smaller kittens are likely to hide under furniture or in small places, so make sure there are things in the room which the kitten can get into or under safely, and which the

dog cannot access. Ensure the cat has plenty of places off the ground to retreat to or watch from. Cats feel safer if they are off the ground

- Similarly, the dog should be able to avoid or move away from the kitten if it chooses to. The resident dog should never be trapped or have to accept unwanted or sustained attention from the kitten.
- Ensure that both dog and kitten have some physical and mental exercise before meeting. This ensures that they are both in a calm and relaxed state, and not so excitable when they meet. Have the dog with a well-fitting collar or body harness, and loose lead to prevent any chasing or lunges at the kitten.
- Reward both dog and kitten for quiet, calm, relaxed behaviour in the presence of each other — initially at a distance, always supervised, and perhaps with an engaging activity for each to do, such as calm play or attention.
- If either the kitten or the dog is excitable, gently and positively remove them from the situation before there is a problem, and allow each to calm down.
- Using rewards, dogs (and cats) can be taught to look at or move towards you on cue, so that you can direct them away from the kitten if need be.
- Ensure that the kitten can access litter facilities, food, water and resting places without having to pass the dog directly, and vice versa. Each animal should have access to everything it wants and needs, without having to encounter the other, Child safety gates can be used to separate dogs and cats and allow the kitten access to its resources without having to pass the dog. until such time as they are relaxed in each other's company.
- Child safety gates can be used to separate dogs and cats and allow the kitten access to its food, for example. The kitten's food bowl should be kept separate from the dog's. When the cat is older, food can be placed on raised surfaces to keep out of the dog's reach.