

Introducing Your New Pet to Other Pets

Family Matters

Bringing a new pet home is exciting—but if you already have a dog or cat, it's important to remember that your existing pet may not share your enthusiasm straight away.

Just like people, pets need time to build relationships. Some become lifelong friends within hours, while others need weeks or even months before they feel comfortable together.

At Amity, we believe successful introductions aren't about forcing friendships—they're about creating trust. That's why our purpose is to **Empower You Through Education**, helping every member of your family enjoy a happy life together.

Remember—Your Existing Pet Was Here First

As exciting as your new arrival is, don't forget your current pet.

They haven't chosen a new companion, and they may feel confused or even threatened by the sudden change.

Continue giving them the same love, attention and routine they've always enjoyed. This reassures them that they haven't been replaced—they've simply gained a new family member.

First Impressions Matter

Avoid putting pets together immediately and expecting them to "work it out."

Instead, allow them to become familiar with each other's scent first. Bedding, blankets or toys can help them learn about one another before meeting face to face.

When introducing dogs, choose a calm, neutral environment where neither feels the need to defend their territory.

When introducing cats, allow them to see and smell one another gradually while still having separate safe spaces.

Go at Their Pace

Some pets are naturally confident, while others need more time.

Don't rush introductions simply because you're excited.

Watch their body language.

Relaxed posture, curiosity and calm behaviour suggest they're becoming more comfortable. Growling, hissing, staring, raised hackles or persistent hiding are signs that they need more time.

Patience now often prevents problems later.

Give Everyone Their Own Space

Every pet deserves somewhere they can retreat to without being disturbed.

Provide separate food and water bowls, beds, toys and resting areas.

Cats should also have their own litter trays and climbing spaces.

Sharing everything immediately can create unnecessary competition and stress.

Reward Calm Behaviour

Whenever your pets are relaxed around one another, reward them with praise, treats or play.

Positive experiences help them associate each other's presence with good things.

Avoid punishment if tensions arise. Fear and anxiety rarely improve through correction—they improve through patience and positive experiences.

Building a Family Takes Time

Some pets become inseparable companions.

Others simply learn to live happily alongside one another.

Both outcomes are perfectly normal.

The goal isn't necessarily to create best friends.

The goal is to create a peaceful home where every member of the family feels safe, respected and secure.

Every Relationship Is Different

There is no perfect timetable for introducing pets.

Some relationships develop quickly.

Others need weeks of gentle guidance.

The most important thing is allowing trust to develop naturally.

Because that's exactly how the strongest relationships are built.

You're not simply introducing two animals.

You're bringing together two members of the same family.

And every family deserves the chance to grow together at its own pace.

Family Matters.

If you need more information, book an appointment with an Amity vet. We're here to Empower You Through Education and help you become your pet's greatest advocate.