



# What to Expect. . . When You Bring a Pet Home

It's always exciting when you bring a new pet home, however it can be over-whelming at the same time. There will be quite an adjustment period for not only you, but even more so for the pet. Imagine a child not being informed of their parents' death and suddenly placed in a new home with strangers. They're going to be fearful, shy, and basically wonder what happened to their family, and may even try to run away...just as the new pet will! Don't expect too much within the first 30 days. Remember, they are used to their routine, not yours, and everything is new and sometimes scary. It will take time and training, but once they realize you are their new forever family, they'll bond to you quickly! We've put together some ideas to help make the new transition a little smoother for everyone!

## **TIPS:**

🐾 Ask for or read our handout on how to properly introduce pets on neutral territory.

🐾 Housebreaking is an issue that comes up a lot. Until a dog gets used to your schedule and routine, it's very common for even a completely housebroken dog to have accidents. Instead of scolding, make them feel like part of the family and figure out the appropriate times for them to get out.



It's important to open the cat's carrier by the litter box so they know instantly where it is. Even if they hide for a few days, they will remember where the box is. Surprisingly, cats under stress can 'hold it' for quite some time, so if there is nothing in the box, it doesn't mean they are going somewhere else in your home.

🐾 Children must be monitored! The pet will be nervous, and if startled, may growl or snap. Think of yourself watching a scary movie alone and someone taps you on the shoulder unexpectedly--you're of course going to have some reaction! Just give them time to adjust before letting children interact.

🐾 Commonly we hear the pet won't eat. This is completely normal and in some cases the pet won't eat for a whole week! It's part of the adjusting process and they will eat when they're ready. You can certainly buy small bags of different foods in case you've picked a brand they don't like -- Try Iams, Eukanuba, Purina or Science Diet which are very often brands we use. Try to avoid mixing in canned food since they'll get 'hooked' on it.

🐾 Many pets, especially cats, are known to hide for a few days when you bring them home. Just let them be, they'll come out when ready. The more you use a happy, excited tone with dogs, the more they're going to trust you which will help them to adjust more quickly. You can certainly use tasty treats with the dogs to coax them out. With a hiding cat, all you can do is give them time. They may only come out at night when you're sleeping, but they'll eat and use the box. Never chase after the cat or hold them against their will, it will only cause them to be more scared. Go about your normal lives and let them tell you when they're ready to come out and be handled.

🐾 Since many dogs are from an unknown background, and being in a new setting, they may do the unexpected. We strongly encourage you to crate them or confine them to a certain room until you have their full trust. We recommend leaving them for short periods when you allow them loose in the home alone. Take a drive around a few blocks and come home. In that time you'll be able to get a good idea what to expect while you're at work.

🐾 Be sure to provide entertainment while you're gone! Leaving toys/treats around the home will keep them occupied. For cats who sleep the day away, they'll be fine all day, however kittens, puppies and adult dogs need to be occupied or they'll get into trouble. Even if you choose to crate a dog for a few hours, you must give them something to do. Giving a treat prior to leaving will turn a negative event a little more positive also!

**CCHS IS HERE TO HELP, CALL OR EMAIL US WITH ANY QUESTIONS: (715) 743-4550**