

Thank you for adopting your new furry family member from Fisantekraal Animal Welfare!
You have made a real difference – in their life and yours. We wish you many happy years of love and companionship ahead.

We believe each animal adopted is an ambassador for animal adoptions everywhere, and we want everyone to be happy throughout the process – and forever.

Many people have worries, concerns, or questions when they adopt a new pet; some go through a ‘what have I done’ moment – this is normal. We hope that this adoption info will help.

No matter how many animals you’ve had before or how often you’ve adopted, there is almost always something to wonder about.

Please contact us if you’re concerned, unsure, or have any questions; we are very happy to help. And please keep us updated on your new pet’s progress – we absolutely love hearing and seeing how they’re doing!

Many tail wags and purrs
Fisantekraal Animal Welfare

www.faw.za.org
info@faw.za.org / adoptions@faw.za.org
062 258 3547 / 078 892 7892

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“I don’t know that I’m adopted”

Put yourself in your new pet’s paws: they don’t yet know that they’re ‘adopted’ or that this is their ‘forever home’. Try to understand that they may be a little bewildered or even scared; they don’t know the rules and what they may or may not do (including where they’re allowed to go ‘toilet’).

No matter how good or bad the place they came from was, this is still a big change - they’re looking to you to show them the ropes, teach the rules, make them feel safe, and help them understand what their place in this new home is. This move is stressful to them – it’s all new and unfamiliar!

Please try to see things from their point of view and be patient, consistent, and calm.

Start off as you mean to go on: with you calm and in charge. They will feel more secure and happier if they know where they fit in. Having a **routine** really helps (i.e. feeding around the same time, etc.) because they know what to expect.

If you have other pets, don’t allow the newbie to run into the house and up to other animals as they may feel they’re being ‘invaded’. And don’t let existing pets to do so to the new one.

Take him/her to the cats' and/or dogs' bedding so they can have a sniff. Watch your new pet to see how they react – he/she should appear interested and friendly.

Your new cat is looking to YOU to show them what to do and what is expected of them. Think of yourself as a tour guide showing around a foreign visitor who doesn’t speak your language!

FETCHING YOUR NEW CAT

Please bring a cat carrier when you fetch your cat. This keeps them safe and feeling secure in the car and helps calm them for the trip. Do not stop anywhere on the way home with your new cat, be it the shops or a friend – it is stressful to them, and you run the risk of them escaping.

WHAT TO FEED YOUR NEW CAT

Animals at the rescue centre eat a wide variety of pellets and soft food.

It’s entirely your decision what you’re going to feed them in future, but we recommend choosing good quality food as this keeps their overall health good, which reduces vet visits.

We always recommended getting a small tub of Protexin or other a probiotic for animals – as many animals get a bit of an upset tummy at first due to the change in food and environment.

PREPARATION

Before you even bring your new cat home, ensure that everything is ready for them so that their arrival is stress-free for everyone. Have a 'safe zone' ready.

This means that:

- the house is secure,
- their sleeping place is in place,
- you have all the 'bits and pieces' you need (including food),
- the entire family knows the rules and routine ahead.

ENSURE THAT THERE IS NOWHERE THE CAT CAN SLIP OUT!

Newly-adopted cats are often curious, scared, or bewildered and may try to leave the property/run away; it is during the first few days that this risk is greatest, and they can get lost or injured. Look at your house from a cat's eye view to spot possible weak spots.

Note: this doesn't mean you have adopted an escape artist – remember, the cat doesn't know that he or she is at their new home or where the home's boundaries are.

A few don'ts

Supervise them in the beginning but stay calm. Avoid 'screaming', even you're if excited and happy. Animals perceive this as unsettling or it can 'wind them up'.

If anyone in your household is very anxious, overly excitable, or anticipating disaster, ask them not to be there initially. Animals sense emotion and can react accordingly; you want them to start off in a calm, balanced, and positive manner. They can meet the new dog when things have calmed down.

No matter how much you want to show the newbie off, rather let things settle down for a day or so, allowing everyone to get used to each other, before having visitors over.

When people do visit ask them to pay attention to the other animal/s before the new one.

SET UP A SAFE ZONE ROOM

- Choose a little-used room where people won't be coming in and out all the time and where you can close the door.
- Provide 'hidey holes' such as cat igloos/tents, boxes, or cat climbing platforms.
- Place the food and water away from where the cat would hide - if it hides under a bed, place the food so it has to come from under the bed to eat - this encourages them to get the idea that it has to come out sooner or later.
- Ensure the litter box is away from the food and water and is cleaned daily.

BRINGING YOUR CAT HOME & HELPING THEM TO SETTLE IN

Important: ALWAYS KEEP NEW CATS INSIDE!

Never allow a newly adopted cat to roam around an open house (doors/windows open) unattended as it may run away.

Some rescued animals take time getting used to the luxury of having a bed of their own and may initially choose to lie on the floor. Don't force them but keep showing them where they may sleep (putting some treats in the bed helps!).

The recommendation is that a new cat stays in one room only for at least two weeks, especially if they seem nervous. It becomes a safe space for them to explore at their leisure. Make sure the room is peaceful but that they can still hear and smell the household noises.

Having a safe zone allows them to get comfortable in that one room and gives them time to relax, come out of hiding with no surprises and they know where they can go if they need time out - there's no panic.

An additional benefit is that your existing animals and the new cat can smell and hear each other through the door and get used to each other's presence without any surprises. Improve things by putting something that smells of the other pets (like a blanket) inside the room with the new cat.

Whereas our main sense is sight, cats view the world through many planes. They are very much aware of sound, smell *and* space around them. By limiting some of those aspects and giving them a chance to know the smells and sounds of the household without encountering everything all in one go, it helps them to process what's happening. Once they explore further, because they now know the sounds, smells, routine, adding the sight and space aspects when they come out of a room isn't quite so overwhelming for them

Remember that your new cat doesn't know you so, even though they like you, they still need to 'suss you out' and get to know you better. Take small amounts of food to them regularly - they then learn the good stuff comes from *you* so you must be okay!

If your new cat is nervous, when you visit, just sit peacefully and don't be discouraged if the cat doesn't come at first. Get her used to the sound of your voice while you are in the room by reading aloud or talking on your phone.

Just keep visiting, preferably with a routine, until she catches on that you're not going to give up *and* they have nothing to fear.

TIP! Rescue Remedy drops (you can get it at Dischem, Clicks, pharmacy, etc) in the water bowl - can help nervous cats settle. You can also try catnip - some cats react to it, some don't. Try putting something that smells of you - such as a tshirt - in the room with her.

What do we do when the cat needs to come out of the room?

Once the cat is settled and at ease in their room, open the door to their room and walk away. The cat might come out straight away, or they might not - but eventually their curiosity will get the better of them and they will come out. If there are a lot of rooms in your house, close some of them to minimise the space.

It will be good to do this when people won't be walking around a lot and could startle her as she's exploring (for example if you're out or in the evening when everyone is settled in, watching TV, or going to bed). Try not to be offended if the cat hides when you walk into a room. And, if the cat still seems very nervous then go back to keeping her in the room for another few days

Once they are at ease in that space, they're ready to explore further. Because they now know the sounds, smells, routine, adding the sight and space aspects when they come out of a room isn't quite so overwhelming for them (like swaddling a newborn baby so they feel secure).

Also, if they feel any nerves, they know immediately they can head for their safe space and process things. That then eliminates the panic and frantic search for a place to hide when someone suddenly comes into the room. All of that builds their confidence.

It may take a few weeks until the cat is ready to go outside into the garden (assuming it isn't going to be an inside cat) and, when it's time to do so, supervise them at first. Only when you are 200% sure your cat is fully bonded with you should you consider letting them outside unattended.

WHAT ABOUT MY EXISTING ANIMALS?

Don't be disappointed if new and existing pets aren't friends straight away; some are instant BFFs and others take longer to bond – just like people.

Make sure existing pets, especially cats, see and understand that they're still important and aren't being 'replaced' but don't 'play favourites'. Ensure you stay in charge.

INTRODUCING A NEW CAT TO EXISTING PETS

from www.petfinder.com

Introducing a new cat to an existing cat-home can take time and patience. Cats are often placed in positions where they're either a resident cat faced with a newcomer cat or they're a new cat coming into an existing cat's territory. Truthfully, it's probably not much fun being in either position.

Throwing two cats into one environment without proper consideration of their positions is just asking for trouble. But, with a carefully planned introduction, cats can ease into accepting one another and may just become life long pals.

1. Keep Your Cats Separated At First

Feed both cats near the door to the 'safe zone' room so they learn to associate the smell and sound of each other with a positive experience. Doling out treats near the door is also a good idea.

After 2-3 days, some cat experts recommend switching the cats' locations so they can get used to each others' smells.

Many behaviorists advise rubbing the cats with the same towel to mix their scents. Try this: use a clean sock to rub on the new cat's face to capture her facial pheromones. Then leave the sock near the existing cat and let him investigate on his own.

After a few more days, the next step is to play with each of the cats near the door, building up positive associations with the scent of the other cat. This play, again, helps each cat associate the other cat with a good time.

2. Slowly Let The Cats See Each Other

If all seems to be going well and your cats aren't hissing or growling under the door at each other, after a week, you can try visually introducing the cats. Installing a screen door or even a high baby gate (that neither cat can jump over) can work. It's helpful to have another human with you so there is one person and one cat on each side of the barrier.

Continue feeding, playing with and giving the cats treats within view of the other cats, but don't force it! If one cat won't eat her food right next to the screen, try moving the food dish a few feet away. Let the cats determine how close you move the dish.

If both cats are eating comfortably, try moving the dish a little closer, but don't be afraid to start off with the food dishes ten — or more— feet apart.

3. Make the Face-to-Face Introduction

The final step in the process is to let the cats be together, face-to-face, for supervised interaction. Don't worry if the cats completely ignore each other or hiss a bit and then walk away. It will take some time for your cats to learn that the other is a friend and not a foe.

Keep watching the cats and let them take things at their own pace as long as no one is starting to bully or harass the other. You should be able to gauge how it's going. If you sense one cat is harassing the other, don't be afraid to seek professional assistance from a behaviorist.

It may take time and a bit of patience but your efforts have a good chance of being rewarded in the long run when your cats become content companions in your home for life.

NOTE: Kittens and older cats

Remember that young animals can be overwhelming to existing pets, especially seniors - make sure they have safe, calm place to retreat to where the new pet may not go. If you have a spare room, this is perfect. Alternatively, try sectioning off a portion of a large room.

Why new pets might escape, how to prevent it, and what to do if it happens.

Newly adopted pets may try to get out of their new home in the first few days. PLEASE be careful!

Here's why (and it's not because they're naughty or don't like you!):

- They do not know they are adopted.
- They do not know you are their new family.
- They do not know where the boundaries of their property are.

They are not 'escape artists' and they are not 'bad dogs' - 99% of the time, they settle within a week to two weeks. *Note: Not all newly adopted dogs run off! Most stay put.*

Put yourself in their paws

Wouldn't you be bewildered? How would you know: here is where 'my' home ends and I may not go further? How would you know: I am supposed to stay here; this is my new home now?

If you are nervous or afraid, anything familiar seems safe. If there's nothing familiar, the unknown is as appealing as staying in a place you know nothing about. Remember that some of these animals have had several homes - their original home, the rescue centre and then yours. Imagine how confusing this can be.

So, please, be aware, be prepared, and give them a chance.

What should you do to prevent it?

- **Secure the property** before you even bring them home (cats should be kept indoors for the first 2 weeks). You may need to add fencing, keep windows shut, etc.) Assess things from an animals perspective to find 'weak spots'.
- **Take a couple of days off to settle them in.** Remember that the dog doesn't have a clue what is going on and is looking to YOU for guidance.
- **Show them** how nice it is inside the property, start taking them out for walks so they can familiarise themselves with their surroundings and the concept of 'on lead outside the property, off lead inside'. This helps them learn where their space begins and ends.
- **Keep dogs on lead with secure collars** when you take them out of the property.
- **Put a collar and tag on immediately** and, if you have to, keep them inside the house and only take them outside into the yard in your presence. (Note: all FAWbies adopted from Jan 2016 are microchipped. If you adopted prior to this, please contact us for assistance.)

What to do if your new pet does get out

1. The minute you discover your new pet is missing, **please contact FAW immediately** so we can assist and put a 'lost dog alert' on their microchip.
2. **Contact all the vets** in the area as well as the **SPCA, Animal Anti-Cruelty League, etc.** You'll be surprised at how far afield strays can be picked up.
3. Ensure you have a **recent photo** - and take your phone with you with the picture on it, or a print out, so you can show people.
4. **Walk around the blocks** near your house (take strong-smelling treats like biltong with you) - they may be in a neighbour's garden, a nearby park, or simply wondering around just around the corner.
5. **Ask** any passersby if they have seen your dog and go to your neighbours to ask if they've taken them in.
6. There are **lost/found Facebook pages** for posting missing pets. If you're not active on Facebook, please let us know so that we can assist.

7. **If you spot your new pet**, unless they're very relaxed in your company already, do NOT chase them! This may cause them to bolt as they're bewildered or they think it's a game. Rather sit down if possible and softly call them, preferably with a treat in your hand.

If, **by the following day**, you still haven't found your dog, you need to make flyers with their photo on it and hand them out and post at vets, noticeboards, and on lamp posts. (Remember to take them down once you've found your pet.)

CONTACTS

FAW general: 062 258 3547 / info@faw.za.org

FAW Adoptions: 078 892 7892 / adoptions@faw.za.org

SPCA Grassy Park: 021 700 4158/59

Animal Anti-Cruelty League Bellville: 021 951 3010

Animal Anti-Cruelty League Epping: 021 534 6426

24-hour vets in Cape Town

- **Tygerberg Animal Hospital Bellville** - 1 Kontiki Avenue, Glen Ive, near Stodels - 021 919 1191
- **Panorama Veterinary Clinic** - 1 Uys Krige Drive, Panorama - 021 930-6632
- **Cape Animal Medical Centre** - 78 Rosmead Avenue, Kenilworth - 021 674 0034
- **Belmont Road Veterinary Clinic** - 16 Belmont Road, Rondebosch - 021 685 7750

**We are always happy to help with advice and assistance, and will do our level best to help.
Please get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.**

**The following is part of the adoption contract which you have signed.
Kindly ensure you have read it carefully.**

1. The adopter undertakes to care for, love, and make part of the family, this/these animal/s.
2. The adopter will ensure that the animal/s is/are comfortable and safe, with the necessary, accessible shelter, and that ample fresh water and food are available every day.
3. The animal/s will not be chained, tied up, or confined, nor will it/they be mistreated in any way.

4. The adopter will ensure the health of the animal/s, including seeking veterinary treatment if necessary, and vaccinating and sterilising the animal/s.
5. Puppies and kittens will complete their vaccinations and deworming, and be sterilised at approximately 6 months of age (mandatory). Vaccinations taking place after adoption will be at the adopters own cost at their own vet. (See point 4 below.)
6. The animal/s, particularly puppies and kittens, will not be left alone for long periods of time.
7. Under no circumstances will the animal be re-homed, sold, or given away.

If, for any reason, the new owner (below-mentioned) is unable to keep or care for this animal, they will contact FAW for assistance. (See point 3 below.)

8. The new owner will ensure that the property is safe for the animal/s. This includes, but is not limited to, secure walls/fences, covered/fenced pools or ponds, and removing health risks.
9. The adopter will inform FAW of any change of address or contact details.
10. FAW representatives will be permitted to make follow-up visits to check on the animal/s.
11. An adoption fee of R600 for dogs, R700 for puppies under 6 months, R400 for cats, and R500 for kittens under 6 months, is payable by the owner to FAW before taking the animal.
12. The adoption fee is non-refundable.
13. Animals will be microchipped before going to their permanent homes and FAW will register this.

Fisantekraal Animal Welfare (FAW) warrants the following:

1. Veterinary treatment for pre-existing conditions will be covered by FAW within a 7 day period after this agreement is signed. Should the animal/s require veterinary treatment within the 7 day period, the adopter will contact FAW immediately to arrange this. Thereafter, all veterinary fees arising are at the adopter's own cost. FAW unfortunately cannot cover any private veterinary fees raised during this 7 day period.
2. FAW is not responsible for costs arising from injury or damage inflicted on the new owners, their family, friends, existing pets, or property by FAW animals, either during viewing or after adoption.
3. If, for any reason, the adopter is unable to keep this animal, FAW will re-home it. Please allow time to find a foster/space at the shelter or a new home.
4. Puppies and kittens adopted under 6 months of age will be sterilised at 6 months, the cost of which is included in the adoption fee. Should the adopter wish to use their own vet, at their own cost, please furnish FAW with proof of sterilisation.
5. FAW vouches that, to the best of our knowledge, the animal/s is/are healthy at time of adoption*. *If the animal has a health condition, this has been discussed with the new owner.
6. All information provided by the adopter will be handled as confidential, and will not be disclosed to any third party without the adopter's consent.