



# Welcome Home: Stress-Less Adoption Tips



Help newly adopted cats and dogs feel safe, reduce stress, and bond faster.

## First 24 Hours

- **Quiet + predictable.** Keep voices low; limit visitors; keep lighting soft.
- **One room first.** Start small; expand territory only after eating and relaxing.
- **Let them choose contact.** Sit nearby; reward calm curiosity with treats.

## First Week

- **Same schedule daily.** Meals, potty/litter, play, and rest at consistent times.
- **Short training/play.** 3-5 minute sessions; stop before they get overwhelmed.
- **Supervise + prevent mistakes.** Crates/gates help dogs; closed doors help cats.

## Stress Signals

- **Cats:** nonstop hiding, not eating 24+ hrs, crouching, hissing, litter avoidance.
- **Dogs:** pacing, tucked tail, lip-licking, refusing food, jumpy startle response.

### When to call a vet (or your shelter):

No food/water for 24 hours, repeated vomiting/diarrhea, breathing trouble, extreme lethargy, signs of pain, or escalating aggression.



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## Set Up a Safe Space

- **Cats:** litter, water, food, hiding spot, scratcher, bed in a quiet room.
- **Dogs:** crate or gated area with bed/blanket, water, and a safe chew.
- **Keep it calm.** White noise/fan helps; avoid crowds and loud TV at first.

## Slow Introductions

- Start with scent (bedding swap) before face-to-face.
- Use barriers/leashes; keep meetings short and positive.
- Treat for calm behavior; stop while everyone is successful.

## Treats & Catnip (Smart Use)

- **Treats build trust.** Pair treats with carriers, new rooms, and new people.
- **Reward calm.** Mark and treat sitting, lying down, relaxed eye contact.
- **Puzzle feeding.** Lick mats, snuffle mats, and scatter feeding reduce stress.
- **Catnip (cats):** Small pinch on a toy/scratcher after your cat is settled.
- **Safety:** Stop if overstimulated; avoid for kittens under ~6 months; keep away from dogs.

## New-Home Checklist

- Food + water bowls
- Bed/blanket
- Carrier/crate
- Toys/chews
- Leash/harness (dogs)
- Vet appointment
- Litter + scoop (cats)
- Scratch post (cats)
- Pawesome Wellness Calming Treats
- CannaNip Catnip

## The 3-3-3 Adoption Rule (realistic expectations)

**3 days:** decompression and rest. **3 weeks:** learning routines and trust. **3 months:** feeling at home.

## Quick Do / Avoid

DO	AVOID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep routines consistent (meals, potty/litter, bedtime).</li> <li>• Offer frequent tiny treats for calm behavior and brave choices.</li> <li>• Give a safe retreat area that kids and guests do not enter.</li> <li>• Use gentle play and enrichment to burn stress (sniff walks, wand toys).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forced greetings, hugs, chasing, or dragging from hiding spots.</li> <li>• Punishment for accidents or fear behavior (it increases stress).</li> <li>• Too much freedom too fast (limit rooms until settled).</li> <li>• Dog parks / busy public places until your dog is confident.</li> </ul>

**Key rule:** Go at your pet's pace. Calm + consistency + positive reinforcement = faster bonding.

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