



The dog should recognise the smell of the cat and now start to associate the smell with the object. Keep the introductions short and this will limit stress on both animals and is less likely to cause frustration in the dog and that urge to chase.

Always end the introduction on a good note when the dog is relaxed and ignoring the cat even if it only happens for a second, reward and then take the dog out. If the cat is getting stressed and is trying to get off the person's lap or out of the box then allow the cat to go. Do not force the cat to stay where she is not comfortable or she will only associate the dog with bad feelings. If the cat knows she can escape the dog she will feel more comfortable.

Keep doing the introductions so that they get used to one another and eventually you should be able to sit with the dog in the room and notice that he is not bothered with the cat.

Keeping the lead on the dog will give you control if he decides to move. Remember to retain the normal, natural things that you do. Sit with the TV or radio on but always be aware of what is happening with the dog and the cat.

Even when the two animals seem to be getting on really well **NEVER LEAVE THEM UNSUPERVISED**. It is important to remember that if you go out always leave the dog in a crate or area where the cat cannot enter. This is because the cat could torment the dog causing possible distress, destruction and harm to him.

# YOU & your new DOG



## INTRODUCING YOUR DOG TO A CAT

### Birmingham

Catherine-de-Barnes Lane,  
Catherine-de-Barnes,  
Solihull, B92 0DJ

info@birminghamdogshome.org.uk

T: 0121 643 5211

[www.birminghamdogshome.org.uk](http://www.birminghamdogshome.org.uk)

### Wolverhampton

Dark Lane, Cross Green,  
Coven, Nr. Wolverhampton  
WV10 7PN

sunnyside@birminghamdogshome.org.uk

T: 01902 790618

Registered Charity No: 222436 • Company Registration No: 662947

**D**ogs will naturally be inquisitive of cats but it is a misconception that dogs hate cats. Dogs like to chase (it's fun after all, they think) and cats will always run away which is why you tend to see this regular chain of events.

However, if introduced gradually and carefully, dogs and cats should be able to live together quite peacefully.

A young pup should be a little easier to introduce to a cat as they may not have seen one and so do not see them as something to chase. Adult dogs that have encountered cats before and have learned that they are fun to chase can be a little harder to introduce and teach. It should be stressed that whatever the age of the dog, the introduction should be the same.

**Scent** – If there are a few days available before you are due to pick up your dog ask the home if you can do a swap on blankets so that you take home the dog's blanket that contains his smell and take in the cat's blanket that contains hers. This way both animals will get used to each others scent before the arrival and meeting.

Place the blanket in the dog's area of the home so that the cat can get used to this smell in this part of the house. If you place the blanket in the cat's bed the chances are she will not want to sleep there thinking that this smell has taken over her area and feel quite put out.

**Areas** – Both animals need their own space - just like us. The cat's area, if possible, should not be moved because after all the cat was here first and the dog should work around her. However, if the cat's bed is an area where the dog is likely to spend a lot of time or pass by frequently it may be worth moving the cat's bed to some other location.

If you do this, do it before the dog arrives so that the cat can get used to the new area. Cat's like high places so try and provide a tall scratch post or an area for the cat to hide. The cat should be able to sleep, eat and use the litter tray without being



disturbed by the dog; she should also have easy access to outside (if she is an outdoor cat).

**Day of arrival** – Make sure that the dog you have collected has had a really good walk before bringing him home. Leave the dog for a few days to settle himself in and remember this is a big day for the dog too. He needs to get used to his areas, new smells and routine etc. He should be used to the cat smell having had the blanket for a few days.

Don't force the cat and the dog together. Instead wait until the dog has settled and then you can introduce them. If the cat comes in then make sure you follow the guidelines below.

**Practice** – You need to practice some basic commands that you can use when introducing the two animals, such as sit, down, stay and leave. Also find out what tasty treats the dog really enjoys and save these for when you really need his attention.

**Introduction** – Ensure the dog has been walked well to get rid of some of his excitement. If he is tired he will be more relaxed and less likely to chase the cat. Also ensure that he has been fed. Place the dog on a short lead and get some treats that he really enjoys. Sit in the living room and practice some of the commands so you have the dog's attention.

When he has settled down you can bring in the cat. If the cat is comfortable sitting on someone's lap then do this but if not, or if there is no one else to help, place the cat in a carrier. Sit or put the carrier at a distance to the dog so that he can see and smell the cat but cannot get to her easily. Allow the dog to smell from a distance but not to move. If the dog is moving then put back into position using commands and treats. When the dog is relaxed and not bothering too much with the cat then reward him. It is important to remember to reward the behaviour you want and correct the behaviour you don't.

#### **For example:**

- Dog is lying down sniffing air but not moving – reward
- Dog lying down ignoring cat – reward
- Dog getting up moving towards cat – correct but using verbal commands and when in place and settled, reward
- Dog barking at cat – correct by using commands and when settled, reward.

