

# Cat & Kitten

## Adoption Guide

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Animal # \_\_\_\_\_

Microchip # \_\_\_\_\_

Person # \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Share updates or contact us at [adoptions@hssv.org](mailto:adoptions@hssv.org)



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# What's Included

The fees for adopting animals allow us provide medical care, food, and shelter the animals in our care.

## Core Treatments\*

Dewormer | Flea Treatment | FVRCP | Rabies

*\*While in our care*

## Spay & Neuter

Cats and kittens adopted through HSSV must be altered prior to adoption.

## Microchip

HSSV uses HomeAgain for its microchip services.  
Animals without microchips will receive one prior to adoption.  
All microchips will be registered with HomeAgain for  
the life of the pet at time of adoption.

## Medical Exam & Behavior Notes

A copy of the animal's medical history and  
any behavior notes will be provided to you at the time of adoption.  
Please consult your vet for any questions on the medical history.



## What Your New Pet Eats

At Humane Society Silicon Valley, we're proud to be part of the Hill's Food, Shelter & Love® program and we feed our pets Hill's® brand pet food.

We offer all our new pet parents the opportunity to participate in the Hill's New Pet Parent program. As a part of the Hill's New Pet Parent program, you will receive an email with a link to Hill's New Pet Parent website, more information about the Hill's food, the Adoption Kit, and other tips for new pet parents. If at any time you wish to no longer receive emails about the Hill's New Pet Parent Program, you may opt-out at the link at the bottom of the emails, or otherwise contact Hill's at [Hills Corporate Consumer Affairs@hillspet.com](mailto:Hills_Corporate_Consumer_Affairs@hillspet.com) or call 1-800-445-5777.

Why we suggest that you continue feeding your new pet Hill's Science Diet:

- Continuity and consistency of food helps reduce digestive distress
- While feeding Science Diet, you are offering your new pet a food that is or has:
- #1 veterinarian recommended
- Precise nutrition supports healthy skin, coat, and stool
- Clinically proven antioxidants for a healthy immune system\*
- Unique foods for healthy dogs and cats of every age, size, and need
- Natural, great tasting ingredients\*
- Not artificially colored, flavored, or preserved\*
- Made in the USA with global ingredients you can trust

*\*Dry foods only*

When you chose Hill's® brands, you help our shelter and the Hill's Food, Shelter, and Love® program!

Would you like to be signed up for the Hill's New Pet Parent Program and other offers and promotions from Hill's? YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

As a part of the Hill's Food, Shelter, and Love® program you receive a starter bag of food for your new pet. It contains approximately 1 week of food as well as a \$5 coupon for your first purchase of any Hill's® pet food product.

# Treatments & Vaccines

A full copy of your pet's medical records will be emailed to you at the time of adoption.

Please note, vaccines or treatments due after the time of adoption will be at the cost of the adopter. We recommend making an appointment with a vet within two weeks of adoption to review your new pet's medical records and create a vaccine plan.

When you adopt a new pet, it is important to develop a relationship with your family veterinarian. Although your new pet has received preventives and has been examined and vaccinated by our medical staff, it is important to have your family veterinarian meet and examine your new pet within 1-2 weeks of adoption. This will allow your family veterinarian to establish a baseline health status for your new pet and to provide any additional preventive care beyond what HSSV has already provided.

## What are our core treatments?

**FVRCP:** Effective against feline rhinotracheitis virus, calicivirus, and panleukopenia. In a shelter environment it is started at 4 weeks of age and repeated every 2 weeks until 4 months old, then again in 1 year.

**RABIES:** Effective against rabies seen in cats or dogs. It is given at 3 months old, then boosted in 1 year.

**FLEA TREATMENT:** We use Frontline for felines in our shelter. It's applied once a month topically and is effective against fleas and ticks.

**PYRANTEL:** Effective against hookworm and roundworm. In the shelter it's given upon intake and repeated in two weeks.

### **PONAZURIL**

Effective against coccidia. In the shelter it's given upon intake and then repeated in two weeks.

We recommend that you discuss with your family veterinarian ongoing health care needs, including future vaccinations and screening tests, such as Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) screening tests (retroviral SNAP tests), for your new cat. Guidelines for vaccinations and screening tests can change, so it is best to seek the advice of your family veterinarian to determine the ideal vaccination and testing schedule based on the lifestyle of your new cat. Your veterinarian can also serve as a resource for optimal nutrition, grooming, training or behavioral concerns, etc. Your pet should be examined by your family veterinarian at least annually, and more frequently for elderly pets, so they can be monitored for subtle changes or problems that can occur as your pet ages.

Just like people, when a cat experiences stress, their immune system can become compromised, and as stressed people can succumb to a cold, a stressed cat can also succumb to a similar upper respiratory infection (URI). While all efforts are made to keep our homeless pets comfortable and happy during their stay at HSSV, a shelter is an inherently stressful place and cats can become ill with URI. The most common cause of URI is viral, and typically causes cold-like symptoms, such as sneezing and a runny nose or eyes. In most cases, URI will resolve without needing treatment. However, on some occasions, this mild viral URI can develop a secondary bacterial infection, usually manifesting with green or yellow nasal and/or eye discharge. These cases may require antibiotics to treat the infection, and an examination by a veterinarian is advised.

Going to a new home from the shelter is an exciting event for the entire family, but this can also cause some stress in your new pet causing some cats that appear healthy when they leave HSSV, to succumb to URI once in their new home. Since the viruses that cause URI can be contagious to other cats, if your new cat is showing any signs of URI, please keep them separated from other cats in the household and seek medical advice from your family veterinarian.

# Finding a Vet

As soon as you adopt a pet, you should develop a relationship with a veterinarian.

Even though pets adopted from HSSV are fully vaccinated and examined by our staff veterinarians, **you should have your family veterinarian examine your pet within 1-2 weeks of bringing your pet home.**

This allows your veterinarian to establish a baseline by which to compare, should your pet develop any problems. Your veterinarian can also serve as a resource to provide advice about feeding, grooming, training, etc. Your pet should have an **annual exam with your family veterinarian**, while geriatric pets may require more visits. By seeing your pet at least annually, your family veterinarian may be able to detect subtle changes and problems in your pet's health early on. Your veterinarian can advise you on how best to meet these changes in your pet's health if they can see how your pet is aging on a regular basis.

**Find a vet at:** [www.hssv.org/choosingavet](http://www.hssv.org/choosingavet)

**Parktown Veterinary Clinic** *HSSV Recommended Animal Hospital*  
1393 S. Park Victoria Dr., Milpitas, CA, 95035

Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Saturday: 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Sunday: closed

408-263-3990    [www.parktownvet.com](http://www.parktownvet.com)



# Congrats on your Feline Adoption!

## Getting Settled

You may have been thinking about bringing home a new friend for a while. Your new feline, however, may be quite surprised by the sudden change in their life. Being in a new place can be scary, even for the most confident feline; there are lots of new sights, sounds, and smells to get used to. Follow these steps to set your feline up to feel safe and confident about their new home.

**1. SET UP A SAFE PLACE:** Set up new your feline(s) in a small room, such as a bedroom or large bathroom, for the first 1-2 weeks. Make sure your kitty has access to food, water, a litter box, toys, a soft place to sleep, and a place to hide. Felines settle in much more quickly if they can get used to a home a little at a time. If your feline is shy too much freedom, too fast can be overwhelming for them and cause unwanted behaviors.

**2. START BONDING:** Give your feline lots of play sessions while in their safe space. If your feline is feisty, get into an early routine of at least two play sessions every day, morning and evening. If your feline is unsure of play or petting at first, start by sitting with them while they eat and offering extra yummy treats. For shy felines, calm, positive interactions are key to them gaining your trust.

**3. ARE YOU READY TO EXPLORE?:** Once your feline seems completely at home in their safe space (eating, grooming, using the litter box, and approaching you for attention), they are ready to slowly start exploring the rest of your home. If your feline hasn't shown these behaviors allow them more time in their safe place to get comfortable. As your feline begins to explore the house at first, supervise them to avoid any bad habits or injury. When they cannot be supervised, place them back in their safe area. If they haven't shown all these behaviors, give them more time to get comfortable.

## Home Sweet Home

Successfully setting up your home will help encourage good behavior in your feline and help them feel more confident and relaxed. Before you open the door for exploration, take some time to consider what your home looks like through the eyes of your feline.

- **GOING UP!:** Felines think vertically in their space and it is very important they have options for perching or resting up off the ground. This can include cat trees, tables, desks, a sturdy box on the floor, or even a window sill with a kitty cot.
- **HIDEY HOLES:** Cats and kittens like to have a safe place to watch the action. Offer places for your kitty to hide or get away when they are. Do not pull your kitty out from their hidey hole to force an interaction as this may cause a setback as they build their trust in you. You can use cat trees, covered beds, or even a cardboard box to provide your kitty with safe cover.

● **GOOD BATHROOM HABITS:** To help your new cat maintain a lasting habit of using their box, follow these guidelines:

- Place the litter box in a quiet, easily accessible location
- Scoop the box daily, and replace all the litter every 1-2 weeks
- For multi-cat home, provide one litter box per cat in the home plus one

Litter box accidents are often a result of stress, including stress from transition into a new home. Be patient, and monitor your kitty. If your new cat has more than one litter box accident and you have checked all the above recommendations, contact HSSV for advice.

● **A FUN HOUSE:** Give your new friend ways to exercise their body and brain and to provide out-lets during the day, especially during a cat's active bursts in between naps. The more interactive and entertaining the house is for your feline, the less likely they will display unwanted behaviors. This should include:

- Scratching posts – they need to scratch and sharpen their claws
- Window perches to view the outdoors
- Tunnels, paper bags and boxes to explore
- Food games and toys, like treat balls or treats hidden in boxes
- Small toys that encourage batting and pouncing

● **USE POSITIVE ASSOCIATIONS:** Your feline should not be expected to be comfortable right away in new places, or immediately bond to their new family. Here's how you can help them along and become best friends:

- Spend time daily with the kitten, but do not force any interactions
- When introducing your kitty to new things or people, use treats to sweeten the deal
- Remember, Food = Good, Human = Food, so Human = Good!

## Playtime

Every cat is a natural born hunter. Nowadays you're providing the food without the hunt; however, cats of any age still have plenty of desire to stalk, pounce, jump, and chase. Daily interactive play with your cat uses up natural energy and helps prevent unwanted behavior. Play can also help encourage a shy cat to come out of their shell.

1. Use interactive toys such as wand toys, strings, laser pointers, etc. Don't use your hands to play as this encourages your cat to use their mouths and paws on you, even when you may not be playing.
2. Move the toy to mimic the movement of prey creeping on the ground or flying through the air.
3. Challenge your cat and make them work for it. Some cats may need you to start slow but then you can build up the movements to keep it exciting.
4. After 10-15 minutes, start to slow down the movements of the toy and calm down the session.
5. Give them a final attack, let them catch their "prey", and reward their effort by offering treats or a meal.
6. If your cat is a feisty, after any period of activity or play, provide a nice cool-down time before you start petting. This gives their mind and body some time to relax and understand play time is over.

*CAT FACT: A cat's natural routine is hunt (play), eat, groom, sleep, and repeat.  
Try to offer play before meal times to encourage a hearty sleep.*

## What Your Cat is Trying to Tell You

Cats have different levels of tolerance for petting and handling. Some can be roughly handled by a toddler and stay as cool as a cucumber, while some show a higher sensitivity to their personal space. Luckily, cats are trying to tell you what they prefer when it comes to interactions.

- **WATCH THEIR BODY:** Cats will give you signs that they're reaching their limit of petting. When you see one or more of these indicators, refrain from petting until these signs subside. These can include:
  - Tail flicking and swishing
  - Quick looks back at your hand when petting
  - Walking away – note that some cats won't walk away so pay attention to other signs they are giving
- **OOPS, I MISSED THE SIGN:** When cats get too overwhelmed with petting, and their signs of needing a break are missed, their next course is to use their mouth and paws.
- **Take 5!** Cats can also get overwhelmed by activity in the home just as much as handling, watch for the same signs above and offer either enrichment activities, playtime, or a break in a quiet place.

*CAT FACT: While a cat rolling on their back may look like a belly rub invitation, most cats are highly sensitive to being pet there. It's best to wait until you've gotten to know your cat's boundaries.*

## Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Every animal is an individual and, while some felines can handle dramatic changes in their lives, others may find new things more difficult to handle. After setting up your home and starting a routine with regular play time, the best way to help your kitty is to be patient and allow your new feline friend time to adjust at their pace. If your cat is showing some undesirable behavior, it is likely due to stress from the transition. Patience and play will take you a long way.

## More Resources

Visit [hssv.org/behaviorhelp](https://hssv.org/behaviorhelp), for more information on unwanted cat behaviors and helping your new cat feel at home.

### Animal Behavior Help

You can contact a member of our Behavior Team with behavior concerns or questions at any time after adoption. You will need your "Person Number" found on your adoption paperwork and can fill out a form at:

[hssv.org/behaviorhelpline](https://hssv.org/behaviorhelpline)

# Bringing Home A Playmate for Fluffy: Introducing a Cat to Cat

Bringing home an additional cat can be a very exciting event for us humans; however, it can be very traumatic for all felines involved. It can end in disaster if not approached carefully! Cats by nature are solitary creatures. They often exist in the wild in very small family groups of two or three but each member also needs to have plenty of alone time. Top all of this off with a very territorial nature and you have a recipe for disaster when introducing an additional cat into your home. Cats can learn to enjoy another cat not of their immediate family group. In some cases, they may learn to merely tolerate another cat in their domain, but it must be done carefully. By using the following guidelines below, you can make that transition much easier and have a greater chance at successfully integrating an additional feline into your household.

## **BASIC GUIDELINES**

Follow each step carefully and do not skip any step. The older in age each animal is, plan on spending twice as much time on each step. It is not uncommon for some older cats that have never shared a household with another cat, to take up to 12 weeks before you finally get to Step Six. Younger animals, such as kittens, will often complete the following steps within 10 to 12 days.

- Do not go on to the next step unless BOTH cats are acting normal; meaning there is no hissing, growling, spitting and all involved are calm. To rush a step may result in aggression, unnecessary vet bills and a lifetime of an adversarial relationship between the cats!
- Pay lots of attention to your existing cat throughout the following procedure, including daily exercise (try a cat aerobics or cat dancer toy). This will help your old cat feel more secure that someone else isn't going to take away your affection.
- Have definite, coinciding feeding times for both cats. This is going to greatly help with the speed of a successful introduction. Lots of little feedings, many times a day do more good than only one or two larger ones.
- Do not at any time physically hold the cats and put them face-to-face. That is a surefire way to stimulate aggression! Cats are not very forgiving either. If they are started out on the wrong foot, it is very difficult to undo the damage.
- Always provide an additional litter box in a different location. If you have more than two cats, you will need to provide at least one box per cat. This is to prevent territorial disputes over this very important resource. Remember to clean the boxes daily to encourage correct litter box habits.

## **STEP ONE: Confine the new cat to its own small room**

This is to be your new cat's "playpen" and safety area. A bathroom, small office or small bedroom where your existing cat normally does not "hang out" are ideal locations for your new cat's room. Put a litter box, bed, food, water, scratching post and toys in the new cat's room. This special room accomplishes several things. One, it decreases the chances of spreading any diseases your new cat may be carrying. (Remember to keep your new cat confined for ten days even if you are able to complete the following steps in a lesser time period.) Two, it helps your new cat get used to the smells, sounds and you, without having to confront a "hostile" greeting party (your existing cat).

Provide your existing cat with his own litter box, bed, toys, etc. in a different area of the house. He may go to the room of your new cat, sniff under the door, hiss, and yell, but just ignore him when he does so. Do not punish him in any way for hissing or growling at this point. Just walk away from him. Give him attention when he is calm.

## **STEP TWO: Use "scented" feeding dishes**

After your new cat has been confined for several days and is not hiding from you or acting nervous, take a small wash cloth, rub it on your new cat and then place it under your "old" cat's food dish just before feeding time. Now do the opposite for the new cat. If either cat is reluctant to eat, try adding something really special to the cat's bowl to entice him to eat. (Or put the wash cloth at a distance from his bowl where he will eat quietly. Gradually over the next few days, bring the wash cloth closer and closer until you can finally put it under his dish without any problems). Repeat at each feeding (always reviving the scent by rubbing on the opposite cat) until each cat eats calmly with no hesitation, hissing or growling. The more feedings you have per day, the faster the process will go. Just feed smaller amounts spread out over the day. Try to do at least two feedings per day, better yet, three or more. The successful completion of this step may take up to two weeks in some cats or as little as four days with others. In any case, do not move on until each cat is relaxed.

## **STEP THREE: Use close feedings**

After the successful completion of step three, place each cat's dish on respective sides of the new-comer's room. Again, feed definite meals to each cat, at the same time, on each side of their door. You do not need to add the scented cloth under the dish any longer. Repeat this process until BOTH cats are acting normal, no hesitation to eat, no hissing, growling, spitting, etc. then go on to Step Four. You can also help this process along by playing daily with each cat under the door with a cat aerobics toy (a rubber pom-pom looking spider on a wire). In the process of playing they will put their paws under the door for the other to see and smell. This may help to engage them in play under the door with each other as well.

## **STEP FOUR: Playing the Switch Game**

If you are starting this step, check to make sure you have had your new cat at least ten days. If it has not been at least ten days, stay on Step Three until then. Again, this is for concerns of spreading possible disease. If it is over ten days and you are still not at this step, do not worry! Go at your cat's pace. Your cat will tell you to move on to the next step by acting relaxed and normal. This step puts the new cat's scent all over the territory of your existing cat but without an actual physical confrontation. ***Do not skip this step!***

Confine your old cat to a comfortable room with a litter box and some of his favorite food. Let the new cat out to explore by just opening the door to his room. Do not carry him out; as we want him to learn the route to and from his room on his own four feet. Let him wander around for several hours under supervision. Play with him and encourage him to relax. Next, put him away in his room and let your "old" cat out. Your existing cat may walk around the house, sniffing, hissing, or growling, as he can now certainly smell that "intruder" in all parts of HIS house. That is OK. Let him walk around and act grumpy. Just ignore him or try to get him to play with you to help relax him. Repeat the switch game daily until BOTH cats are acting normal and are relaxed.

## **STEP FIVE: Limited Contact**

After successful completion of Step Four, start this next step by putting our new cat back into his safe room. This process will allow the cats to see each other but not make physical contact. Either: Stack two 36" high-tension gates (baby gates) in the newcomer's doorway, but with about two inches left at the very bottom. (Enough to get a paw under but not a head.) Gates are available at pet stores, children's specialty stores or department stores. Or try borrowing some from your friends.

*OR:* Use two hard plastic doorstops, jam the door of the room with the stops one on each side with the door cracked open only two to three inches. Make sure that neither cat can fit his head through the opening. Check that the door is secured and will not suddenly pop open or slam shut if a cat body slams against the door aggressively. They should be able to whack each other with their paws and investigate without full body contact. Again, encourage the cats to play through the opening.

Continue the feeding ritual from Step Four above but with each cat still on their respective side of the baby gates or jammed door. When you are not home or cannot supervise at least peripherally, close the door. Hissing, growling, posturing should be virtually at nil before you continue to Step Six.

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### **STEP SIX: Let them meet casually**

After the successful completion of ALL the steps above, you are in great shape to now just let the cats casually find each other in the household. Start first by heavily exercising EACH cat separately, especially if one animal is young and very playful. If one animal wants to play so badly that he harasses the other cat, they can become enemies quite quickly. Next, get each cat's food dish ready with something really good, like some bits of tuna or a tablespoon of wet food. Just before feeding time, leave the new cat's door open or take down the stacked baby gates. Let the cats casually find each other and then feed them a meal, so they are eating about one foot away for each other. Next, go ahead and get out a cat toy and play with the cats together. The whole process of Step Six is designed to associate something really pleasant with having this other cat around. Some cats may hide; there may be some initial hissing or growling. That is OK. Let them work it out as long as no one is launching a full out physical attack on the other. Keep trying to feed them close together as well as play their favorite games with them.

### **FINAL COMMENTS:**

DO NOT LET ONE CAT BECOME A BULLY. If one cat always seems to be the aggressor, supervise any cat interaction. Be ready with a squirt bottle set on a straight stream to break up any catfights. Just make sure it is harassment and not play! Do not leave the cats together unsupervised if you are having this bully problem. Put the bully into confinement when you cannot watch them.

TRY TO EXERCISE THE AGGRESSOR MORE HEAVILY before they are allowed to interact. This often takes off the "edge" and makes the aggressor more agreeable. The disagreeable one can also wear a harness dragging a six-foot leash under supervision. The harness is so you can quickly remove him from the situation. Again, try to associate something positive with having the other cat around, like special treats or play.

**If you have not carefully followed the guidelines above, go back to the beginning and start over.** Be warned that the introduction may take up to three times as long on the second go around as you have to go back and try to repair that "bad first impression". To introduce any new animal into your household takes a lot of time and patience. It can go smoothly if you take your time and follow the steps above. But do not expect things to be perfect overnight or try to rush things as you may end up with archenemies instead of best friends! 13

## Living with Dogs and Cats

Dogs and cats can learn to get along with one another in the same household. They may never relish each other's company, but they can learn to tolerate each other. It is easier to introduce a puppy to a kitten since they are both young and have not had bad experiences with the other species. But even older dogs and cats can learn to live with each other with a few simple rules.

### **1. NEVER ALLOW YOUR PUPPY OR DOG TO APPROACH YOUR CAT**

You may think that your dog just wants to be friends, but your cat will allow just so much sniffing before she decides to tell your dog to "back off!" Dogs like to chase small creatures. That is part of their hunting instincts, so it is not that your dog is being bad, he is following his instincts. Keep your dog in a down/stay whenever your cat is in the room. That way the dog is under control while the cat can gain some confidence around him. If you do not have verbal control over your dog, meaning you can't stop him in his tracks when you tell him "NO" or "OFF", then keep him on a leash in the house until you can learn to verbally control him. Just let your dog drag a six to 10 foot leash around the house behind him so you can stop him easily. Praise your dog as soon as he stops chasing your cat. If you cannot get a handle on the dog's behavior, a good quality training class can put you back in control of the dog so the cat can enjoy her home too! Do not allow your dog to chase ANY small animals. That will only undermine training your dog to leave your cat alone.

### **2. ALLOW YOUR CAT TO APPROACH YOUR DOG.**

By all means, allow your cat to walk up and investigate your dog but watch carefully so the dog does not attempt to chase your cat. By allowing this to happen, your cat will gain trust in you and your dog that nothing bad is going to happen to her. Your cat will begin to realize that sharing a house with a dog (who is not allowed to approach her) isn't so bad at all!

### **3. ALLOW YOUR CAT TO HIDE IF SHE WANTS TO**

Do not force a meeting between the two. Allow your cat to investigate the dog on her own time; just make sure the dog is not allowed to chase her at ANY time. Give her a quiet room to escape to with her food, out of reach of the dog. It may take as long as eight to 10 weeks before your cat will adjust to sharing her home with a canine pal.

### **4. KEEP THE DOG AND CAT SEPARATED WHEN YOU ARE NOT HOME**

Until you feel that your dog is not going to terrorize your cat at any time, do not leave them alone. Either put your cat in a room with the door closed (make sure your cat has her litter box in there as well as some toys and water) or put your dog into confinement (such as a crate placed in your house)

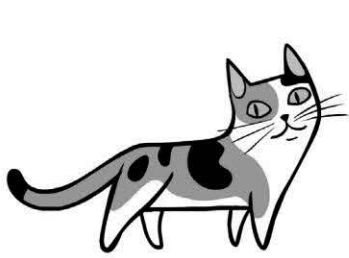
### **5. REWARD ANY POSITIVE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE TWO**

Every time the dog lets the cat approach him or lets the cat walk by him without chasing her, PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE such as saying in a happy voice, "GOOODDD DOGGG! WHAT A GOOOD BOY YOU ARE!"

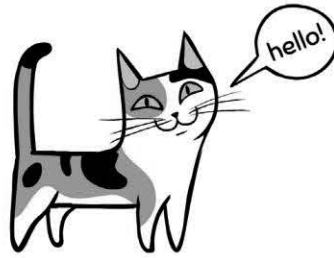
### **6. GIVE YOUR DOG AN OUTLET FOR HIS CHASE BEHAVIOR**

Teach your dog to chase a ball, Frisbee, tether ball or squeaky toy, rather than your cat. Regular exercise can also help your dog remain calm around your cat also.

# CAT LANGUAGE



INTERESTED



FRIENDLY



ATTENTIVE



RELAXED



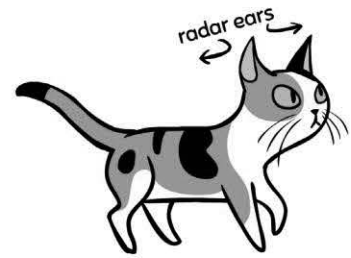
TRUSTING



FRIENDLY, RELAXED



CONTENT



CONFLICTED, CAUTIOUS



PLAYFUL



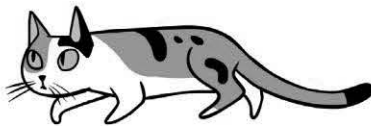
EXCITED



"THIS IS MINE"



ANXIOUS



PREDATORY



WORRIED



FRIGHTENED



THREATENED



TERRIFIED



SUPER TERRIFIED



IRRITATED



DISGUSTED



