

Taking a shelter pet home

Shelter pets can be wonderful companions. Bringing a pet with an unknown history and unknown habits into your home can be challenging, but planning and preparation can help set your new pet up for success.

- ▶ Be patient. Shelter pets may need several months to feel at home.

Visit the vet

We recommend letting your veterinary team evaluate your new pet for possible health problems or signs of disease before you bring them home. Your vet can also help to advise you about any risks or concerns that may affect the pets you already have.



Housebreaking

You may need to teach a new dog when and where it's acceptable to "go" in your home, just like a new puppy. For cats, place litter boxes in quiet, easily accessible areas, and make sure to show them where their box is located.

Introducing a new shelter pet to other pets

Take your time, and introduce your new pet to other pets slowly to help them all get along.

Dogs

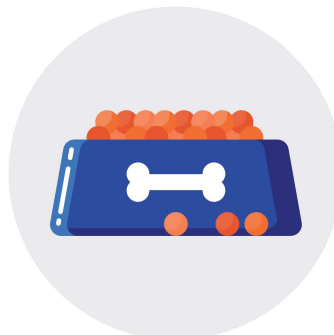
Dogs should be on leashes when they meet. Allow them to sniff each other without touching. Gradually, allow the dogs to get closer and interact. Keep them leashed at all times, and be prepared to pull them apart if either of them displays aggression.

Cats

Keep cats separated by a closed door, so they can smell each other. When you do open the door, make sure your new cat has plenty of hiding spots as they learn about your home, family members, and additional pets.

Feeding a new shelter pet

Some shelter pets, especially former strays, may be food aggressive and guard their bowls. Feed your shelter pet separately from other pets until they're comfortable with their new surroundings, and confident their food won't be stolen.



How to help your pet

- Teach your new dog where to "go"
- Show your new cat where litter boxes are located
- Slowly introduce your new pet to other household pets
- Feed your new pet away from other pets
- Consider keeping your shelter pet in a safe crate when you aren't there
- Need immediate advice? Ping Vet Chat™—included in all pet Optimum Wellness Plans®!

