

Dog & Cat Introduction Steps

The goal isn't best friends on day one; it's **a calm dog and a cat who feels safe enough to stay in the room**. Move at the pace of the more worried animal, keep every session short and successful, and keep them apart whenever you can't watch.

FILLABLE PDF – TYPE ON A COMPUTER OR TABLET, OR PRINT AND FILL IT IN BY HAND.

DOG'S NAME

CAT'S NAME

START DATE

SET UP FIRST

- ☐ **Cat base room** with food, water, litter, scratcher, perches and hiding spots
- ☐ **Dog "settle" on a mat** practised until it lasts about 30 minutes
- ☐ **High escape routes:** perches and exits the cat can reach without passing the dog
- ☐ **A sturdy baby gate**, partly covered with a towel at first

THE STEPS

- 1 Swap scents:** each sleeps on a towel for a few days, then swap. Keep them away from the cat's food.
- 2 Sounds through a door:** feed each pet near its side of a closed door.
- 3 Gate, covered:** short sessions, dog on a loose leash and harness, cat free to leave.
- 4 Gate, uncovered,** a little more each time both stay relaxed.
- 5 Same room, dog leashed,** cat with high escape routes; end before anyone gets tense.
- 6 Supervised freedom** only after many calm sessions. Separate them when you leave home.

SLOW DOWN IF YOU SEE

The dog

Staring, stiff body, raised hackles, whining or barking, a tight leash.
End the session calmly.

The cat

Hissing, hiding, flattened ears or a puffed tail. Let the cat leave; never hold or crate it to meet the dog.

PROGRESS LOG

DATE	STEP	MINUTES	DOG CALM?	CAT CALM?	NOTES

Get help early: a dog that has chased or caught small animals may never be safe with cats. Talk to your vet or a veterinary behaviorist before introductions, and if a good start breaks down. Never punish either pet.

THE FULL VERSION: DOG & CAT INTRODUCTION PLAN · ON ETSY: [NEWDOGCO.ETSY.COM](https://www.etsy.com/shop/newdogco)

Sources: International Cat Care / ISFM (introducing cats and dogs); American Association of Feline Practitioners; VCA Animal Hospitals.