

BEST PRACTICES FOR ACCLIMATING YOUR NEW PET

(Adapted from NYC Second Chance Rescue)

DECOMPRESSION:

Decompression is a calming period that a pet needs when first arriving in your home. It is imperative the pet has this time to adjust to the new environment, people, and other animals. The average decompression time is about two weeks, but it differs for every animal.

Many people do not realize how crucial decompression is and how this can make or break how your pet is introduced into the new home. Set your pet up for success!

It is also imperative that the new pet and resident pet(s) have time to adjust to a new animal in the home. Many people do not realize that this takes time and cannot be rushed.

In the first couple of weeks when keeping pets separate, it is essential to “crate and rotate”. This means when the new pet is due for some time out of the crate or room they’re first getting settled into, please be mindful that the other pet is in a separate room or in his/her crate, so there are no opportunities for interaction.

After the first week, if the animals seem to be tolerating one another in the home (still being kept separate) you can start introducing them in week two. For dogs, you can walk them on leash together, but always keep them at a distance and take things very slowly. If the dogs are relaxed around each other during those walks, then they can have some social time in the house, dragging leashes and under supervision. When they are good 100% of the time dragging leashes and have been playing nicely, the leashes can be removed and dogs given more time together. For cats, carefully supervised interactions may begin. This may take more than two weeks, so please be patient. They should still be supervised at all times for a period of months, if not indefinitely, depending on the pets.

During this decompression time, we highly recommend no long walks, car rides, pet store excursions, parties, etc. until the pet appears to be fully acclimated (necessary trips to the vet are excluded from this). Any of the above activities or events provide an over abundance of stimuli and are very stressful, especially when the animal still has not fully established a relationship with you.