Cat Introductions

- **Take it slowly.** Cats feel calm and happy in a stable environment. Do not immediately introduce face to face without a period of adjustment. It may be scary or surprising for both and isn't a good start to their relationship. Gradually introduce using smell, sound, and then sight.
- **Create separate spaces**. Set your new cat up in a smaller room, separate from resident cats. Give them at least a week to adjust to their new space, free from other animals. Take them to this space when you first arrive home, open the carrier, and allow them to come out and explore on their own terms.
- **Use scent as first introduction.** Cats feel safe when surrounded by their scent. Once comfortable in their room, switch beds or blankets and food bowls to help your cats learn about each other.
- **Use visual contact before physical introductions.** If they respond well to one another's scent, let them see each other. Open the door to the room enough so they see each other, but not enter. If they are calm reward with treats. Calm can be walking around, sniffing, or ignoring. If either seem stressed or unhappy then keep the introduction short. Gradually repeat later. It may take a few sight introductions before they react well face to face.
- Despite thorough cleaning and vaccination protocols cats can be incubating illness. During times of stress and change they may shed the virus or start showing clinical symptoms. Keeping your new cat separate from resident cat(s) and washing hands between handling reduces the chances of transmission.
- **Make sure there are enough resources.** Cats do not like to share their things. Have enough food/water bowls, litterboxes, and hiding spaces to avoid tension and conflict. Have one of each type of resource per cat, plus a spare.
- **Be patient.** It may take many short meetings before your cats are happy to be near one another unsupervised. This may take several weeks. Keep a close eye even once they seem friendly. There may be a few conflicts, especially if resources need to be

rearranged. A Feliway diffuser can create a calm environment, reducing stress between cats. Plug in where they spend most of their time.