

The First 7 Days

How to Set Up a New Dog or Cat for Success Without Stress (for you or them)

GO SLOWER THAN YOU THINK

Think “less, not more” in the first few days. That means fewer spaces to explore, fewer people to meet, fewer expectations. Adjustment happens through calm repetition, not exposure.

GIVE THEM A DEFINED, SAFE SPACE

Every animal needs a place that is predictable, quiet, theirs. This might be one room (especially for cats), a gated area, a crate or covered bed.

DON'T EXPECT INSTANT CONNECTION

Trust is built over time. Your role in the first week isn't to create a bond. It's to create safety. Safety creates trust. Trust creates connection.

WATCH FOR OVERLOAD

Overload is NOT disobedience. Overload can look like ignoring you, hiding, pacing, overexcitement. The best approach is to reduce stimulation.

EXPECT IT TO FEEL UNCERTAIN

You might feel unsure, overwhelmed, even a little regret. That doesn't mean it's a bad fit. It means you're in the middle of transition-for both of you.

