

Getting Your New Kitten To Trust You

New kittens can be very scared and shy at first. While some are gluttons for affections right from the get go, others may be more cautious and might shy away from you. Some might want to find a secluded corner or closet to hide in. If your new kitten is acting this way, don't feel bad as this is not uncommon behavior. Here's some things you can do to get your kitten used to interacting with humans.

1. Put the kitten in a small room where there are no hiding spots. Be aware that kittens can climb into very small spaces (I once had one climb in a cabinet hole next to the dishwasher!). They should be in the room by themselves with no other pets. Start them off in a cage with enough room for them to run around a bit. Put a box in the cage to allow them to go into if they need to a little security. The cage can be partly covered with a blanket or towel to help them feel safer. Using a pheromone spray like Feliway at one spray per day will help too - just do not spray it around the litter box.

2. Remember that the kitten is a small scared animal and you need to act according to the animal world. This means that you should not stare in at the kitten. Staring is predatory behavior and will scare your kitten. When you look at him, make sure you blink a lot and turn your head often. Practice trying to touch the kitten after he has been in the cage a couple of days. If he is not receptive to your hand right away, try using something like a back scratcher to rub their fur. Attempt to move your hand down the back scratcher to get closer to the kitten as you try this.

3. Spend just a little time with the kitten at first and increase that time as the days go by. A kitten needs at least two hours per day of interaction time with you. One person should do this at first, probably for the first 5-7 days you have had the kitten. Then one or more other people can be added to help the kitten get used to being around more people. Use a toy in your hand to play with the kitten and get him used to being close to your hand. Move your hand closer to the kitten when you hold the toy until you can touch him. Giving the kitten a special food treat also helps them get used to you being close to them.

4. Playing a talk radio station softly can help the kitten get used to human voices.

5. After the kitten starts letting you touch him you can start to let him run around outside of the cage. You may take the litter box out of the cage now and put the litter box and food at opposite sides of the room. Spray the Feliway around the room now. Do not spray it near the litter box. Start playing with them by using toys they like such as newspaper balls and string toys. This play time will turn into them looking forward to your return to play more with them. Do not forget to touch occasionally and pet them during play time.

6. After a time, just sit in the room with the kittens and do what you want to - like read, watch TV or use your computer. This will help them get used to people that are not there just to pay attention to them. Then after a while, start to play with them. Try to bring in other people in the room with them more often and for at least 30 minutes at a time. The other people should try to play with the kittens and also try to pet them.

If you have a shy kitten, it's important to make an effort to help him come out of his shell. If you do nothing, the kitten may never get used to people and grow up to be a cat that hides all the time.

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About the Author

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