

Introducing your new Barn Cat

Thank you for saving the life of a shelter cat by giving it a fabulous barn home! In order to help your new cat transition to its new home, please follow these important steps, and don't hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions!

First Steps:

Your new cat should be set up in a confined area when it first arrives at your barn, for approximately a week. If the barn doors close securely, the cat can be confined to the barn, but most people prefer confining the cat to a tack room or feed room. While confined, your new cat should have access to a clean litter box (even if the cat will not have a litter box once released), food and water. By keeping your cat in the barn for about a week, your cat will associate the barn as "home base" so that once the cat has free reign of the property, it will be more likely to stick around and know where to come for food. If there are other animals in the barn area (like cats and/or dogs) it is recommended you keep your new cat separate from these animals for at least a week so the cat can adjust to one big change (location) at a time.

Integrating:

After about a week of being kept comfortable in the barn or room in the barn, you can open up the area and let the cat explore. We recommend that the first time you give your cat access to the outside, it be daylight so that you can monitor for any problems. It can be overwhelming for your new cat to see the full property the first time with dogs or kids running around, so try to keep the property as quiet and stress-free as possible when you first open the doors. If you have other animals on your property, your new cat will need time to adjust to living with them- give them time! Most cats, given enough time and space, will transition into happy coexistence with other cats, dogs, and even farm animals. Let your new cat and current cat work out their differences- sometimes cats need to make noise or scuffle a little to learn their place in a home's social order- this behavior is normal.

Feeding:

Even though your new cat will be a valuable partner in mouse control, it's important that you still give your cat access to food and water daily. Cats do not/will not hunt more if you withhold food, so make sure you're keeping your cat

healthy with regular feeding. Routine feeding times/places will also help keep skittish cats from wandering off the property.

Medical Care:

Your new cat is up to date on (at least) its Rabies vaccine, spayed or neutered. Your cat has also been treated for fleas. We recommend that you continue your cat's vaccination schedule as the years progress. Keeping your cat up to date on shots is an important part of keeping them healthy while living outside.

Tips:

- During the first day or two, the cats may struggle to find a way out (especially at night). They will calm down in a day or two after they realize that they will not be harmed.
- Feed on a regular schedule, preferably twice a day (wet and dry).
- If crated, keep it covered with a sheet to reduce stress.
- Rattle the food in a box or bowl each time you feed so the cats associate the sound with food.
- Give the cats treats occasionally.
- Make frequent (minimum twice daily) verbal attempts to bond with the cats.

If a cat escapes during the confinement period, make sure food and water are left out and that their used litter (for scent) is sprinkled around the area. Cats often hid for a period of time but will stay close. Leave food and water to prevent them from leaving in search of food. When the cats are ready for release, continue feeding in the same area and on the same schedule as before. Typically, they will run and hide after initial release.