



Working Cats: How to help them adjust to their new home

Congratulations on your new working cat. It is very important that your cat remain in the crate for **two weeks**. Do not let the cat out of the crate before two weeks as the cat will most likely run away. Even once they are properly acclimated, the cat may wonder from their new home.

Setting Up The Crate:

- 🐾 The crate should be placed inside building - the cat's main home. Place it in a convenient location for easy access to clean and feed.
- 🐾 The crate should be in an area free of wind, rain and sun, but afford the cat the vantage point to see its new environment to begin acclimating. Such things would include, but are not limited to, sights, sounds and smells.
- 🐾 If space is available, place the crate on a sturdy table to give the cat an elevated view of the surroundings.
- 🐾 If using a wire cage, cover the entire crate with an old sheet or large towel leaving one side open that faces outside so the cat can view its surroundings.
- 🐾 Place the litter pan at the front of cage or in a location that is easily accessible.
- 🐾 Place a food and water bowl as far away from the litter pan as you can but still in easy reach.
- 🐾 Use a carrier, cardboard box with an old towel for bedding inside the crate.
- 🐾 Lining the bottom of the crate with newspapers can make clean up much easier.
- 🐾 Provide a couple of toys (plush toy and a plastic ball toy).

Examples of setups

Note: If using a spare room, such as a tack room, for confinement, try to provide the cat with access to view areas outside the room. For example, a screen door, window, etc.



Putting the cat in the crate:

- 🐾 After crate is setup, place front of carrier inside the crate and open the door to allow the cat to safely enter the crate.
- 🐾 If using the cat carrier in the crate, place the carrier inside the crate, open the carrier and securely close the crate.

Daily care while your cat is acclimating to the new home:

- 🐾 Provide clean water, fresh food and clean the litter at least once a day
- 🐾 Feed the cat some canned wet food (1 or 2 times a day) – When feeding wet food be sure to call the kitty by saying “Here Kitty, Kitty” (or use their name if you chose to name them). This will teach the cat to come back home when called once released from the cage. Treating with cat treats can also help.
- 🐾 ***Spend time out with the cat multiple times a day during the confinement period.*** This time can be as simple as talking to the cat, hanging around when feeding the wet food or if the cat shows interest in playing, perhaps play with the cat with a feather wand toy through the cage. Spending this time can increase the chances of the cat sticking around after being released from the cage.

Time to let the cat out (after a minimum of 2 weeks but can be up to 4 weeks):

- 🐾 ***Open the cage and walk away but don’t leave the area.***
- 🐾 Allow the cat to exit at their own pace. Do not force the cat.
- 🐾 Start feeding the cat near the crate but not inside it.
- 🐾 Keep the crate in the building (opened). A cat may sometimes continue to sleep in the crate. If the cat no longer uses it, it can be removed.

****Very Important****

You must continue to provide food and water for your cat daily. Cats cannot live on mice alone and will leave if you do not provide them with cat food. *Don’t worry, they will still hunt for mice even if you feed them.*

It is highly recommended that you protect your cat from fleas and ticks by administering flea prevention on a regular basis. Speak with your veterinarian for the various options available.

If you should have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Community Cat Coordinator at **tammy.freeman@clevelandcountync.gov** or by calling **704.481.9884**.



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The mission of the Cleveland County Animal Services Department is to protect the health and safety of our residents; promote humane care and prevent cruel treatment of animals; and work to reduce the number of stray and homeless animals in our county.