

# your new cat

## *tips for the first day, first week, and first month*

### bringing kitty home

The first day, you will want to have a special room set up for the kitty before you release them from their carrier. This room will be their **safe haven**.

- Choose a small, quiet room with no human-inaccessible hiding places such as under furniture, at the back of closets, etc.
- The room should have **food and water bowls, litter box, some soft bedding, a cat tree or other elevated perch, a scratching post, toys, and a few hiding places that are easily accessible by you (cardboard boxes, carriers, etc.)**.
- When you arrive home with your new cat in a carrier, place the carrier in the safe haven. Let your cat come out in their own time. You can sit quietly in the room and offer tasty snacks to lure them out.
- Your new cat may not eat much at first. Be sure to offer them a variety of cat foods and treats, including the food they were eating at IndyHumane. If your cat goes more than 2 days without eating, call your veterinarian for advice!

**The first week, you should slowly get to know your cat.**

- Give your new cat time to decompress: at least a day in the safe haven. The cat will need longer if they are bashful or if you have resident pets. Sometimes it can take weeks for a cat to adjust to a new environment. The length of their adjustment period will depend on their temperament, past experiences and the presence of other animals in your home.
- Let your new cat set the pace when getting to know you: when your cat is ready for affection, they will seek it out!
- Be sure to visit your new cat in their safe haven! Watch their body language for signs they are fearful or stressed: **hissing, ears held back, pupils enlarged, tail against the body (especially the abdomen), and crouching with their legs tucked under them**.
- **A relaxed cat will eat, play, seek out affection, lie on its side with its legs and paws away from its body, have almond-shaped pupils and forward ears**. When your cat is relaxed in their safe haven, you can open the rest of the house to them. Let your new cat explore the rest of the house at their own pace.

**By the end of the first month, most cats will be comfortable in their home, but many will need more time.**

- Your new cat may need longer in their safe haven if you have other pets. If you have resident pets, see our advice on introducing your new cat to resident pets!