

Quick Guide: DECOMPRESSION



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?



Shelters can be a very stressful environment, and adjusting to a new home takes time. Decompression allows your cat to settle, build trust, and show their true personality. Expect this process to take **4-6 weeks**, though every cat is different.

Patience and consistency are key! Allow your new cat the time and space to adjust, and you'll set them up for a happy, stress-free life in their forever home.

1

Forget Expectations:

Your cat's behavior will change as they settle in. Be patient and avoid comparing them to past pets or other people's cats.

2

Give Them Time:

Cats often take 2-4 weeks (or longer) to decompress and feel truly safe. *Some hide, others may seem aloof—this is all normal.*

3

Quiet Exploration:

Allow your cat to explore a small, safe area of your home at their own pace. Avoid giving them full access too soon, which can be overwhelming.

4

Minimal Affection: (at first)

Let your cat come to you. Avoid picking them up or petting them too much right away—especially near their face or belly. Respect their body language.

5

Avoid Overstimulation:

Keep noise, visitors, and handling to a minimum. If you have children, teach them how to interact gently and when to give the cat space.

6

Slow Introductions:

Wait **at least 7-10 days** before introducing your cat to other pets or letting them roam the whole house. Introduce new people and animals gradually and calmly.

7

Create Positive Associations:

Use treats, toys, and soft praise to reward calm behavior. Never punish nervousness—gentle, consistent reinforcement builds trust.

8

Provide Hiding Spots:

Give your cat access to cozy, covered areas where they can retreat and observe. Don't force them out—these safe zones help reduce stress.

9

Stick to a Routine:

Consistent feeding times, litter box cleaning, and quiet interaction help your cat feel safe and in control of their environment.

