



Introducing Your New Barn Cat

Thank you for adopting a Barn cat and providing him or her with a great home! In order to help your new cat transition, please follow these important steps, and don't hesitate to contact Loudoun County Animal Services if you have any further questions!

First Step

Your new cat should be set up in a confined area when it first arrives at your barn, for approximately 3-6 weeks. It is best to confine your new cat to an enclosed workshop, tack room, or other area in the place that they will ultimately use as shelter year round. 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 confined for their first month, your cat will associate the shelter as "home" and become accustomed to the new sights, smells, and you as their caretaker. If there are other animals in the barn area (like other cats or dogs) it is recommended you keep your new cat separate from these animals for at least 3 weeks so the cat can adjust to one big change at a time.

Second Step

After being kept comfortable in the enclosed space, 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. Additionally, you may wish to do it at feeding time to give your cat a positive associate with their new freedom. It can be overwhelming for your new cat to see the full property so try to choose a quiet and stress-free time.

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 farm animals!

Feeding

Even though your new cat will be a valuable partner in critter control, it's important that you still give your cat access to food and water daily. **It is a myth that cats must be hungry to hunt.** Please make sure to keep your cat healthy with regular feedings. Routine feeding times and locations are important in keeping skittish cats from wandering off the property.

Medical Care

Your new cat is up to date on FVRCP, Rabies, spayed or neutered, and microchipped. Your cat has also been treated for fleas and dewormed! It is required by law that you continue your cat's rabies vaccination schedule as the year's progress. There are several mobile veterinarians that will often make house calls to vaccinate or examine your cat(s). Keeping your cat up to date on shots is an important part of keeping them healthy while living outside.