



New Pet FAQ's

What can I do to help my new pet fit into my household?

Patience is the key ingredient to the successful integration of a new pet into a home. Every animal has his or her own individual personality, and it will take time for the both of you to settle into your new family. VBSPCA Pet Academy offers a variety of different training classes and workshops to help you strengthen your relationship, and our trainers are happy to help! You can also visit the post adoption resources page on our website for additional information on how to make the transition easier for you and your pet.

I have a pet at home. How do I introduce my new pet to my resident pet?

This is an area where you want to be extra careful and patient. Introducing pets too soon can lead to territorial behavior, so it is best to move slowly. Start off by keeping your new pet in a separate area or room that your resident pet cannot access. This will help the new pet settle. As for next steps, there are lots of tricks and tools based on the species you are introducing, so you will want to do a little research online. There are many articles out there providing steps and instructions on how to best manage this, so please take some time to see what works best for your home. Handling introductions properly is a key to a happy household. Moving too soon can lead to a lot of problems.

My new pet is acting strangely. Is something wrong?

Even though going to a new home is exciting, it can also be scary! Many new pets will spend long periods of time going from room to room, and this is normal. It is also common for housebroken pets to have accidents, and this is to be expected. Your home is a new environment and you haven't learned each others communication skills, so it may take a little while for things to settle into a successful routine. If you brought home a puppy or kitten, it is common for them to whine or cry for several nights.

What should I feed my new pet?

You will be provided with a starter supply of Purina One, or any specialized food your new family member is currently eating at the VBSPCA. Keeping food familiar can help to reduce stress after a change in environment and is also easier on an animal's stomach. If you prefer to change brands, slowly transition to the new food. Gradually changing their diet gives their digestive system time to adjust which helps prevent an upset stomach. If the animal is on a prescription diet, please check with your vet before making any changes.

I am following your food suggestions above, but my pet is not eating.

The stress of a new home environment can cause pets to eat very little or refuse to eat at first. Try adding wet food to encourage them to eat, but if they have not eaten in more than 24 hours, contact your veterinarian.

My pet is on medication. What do I do with it?

Your pet's medication has labels with specific dosing instructions. If you are having trouble getting your pet to take the pill, you can hide it in small pieces of hot dogs, cheese, balls of wet food, or soft treats like pill pockets.

What should I do if my new pet needs a veterinarian?

At the VBSPCA, we believe that your pet's veterinarian is an important partner in his or her lifelong care. We encourage you to start a relationship with a vet as soon as you adopt, and we would be happy to refer you to a local practice. The VBSPCA Medical Clinic offers low cost veterinary services and walk-in vaccine clinics to households with an annual income of \$65,000 or less. Our walk-in vaccine clinics are also open to VBSPCA Foster Families and Military personnel. Spay/Neuter services are available to the community regardless of income. Please visit our website if you are interested in scheduling an appointment or would like more information. If you have any questions about your recently adopted pet's health, please contact the shelter. The VBSPCA is unable to reimburse costs incurred at outside veterinary practices.

*For post surgical or upper respiratory concerns that surface within the first 10 days of adoption, the animal may be seen at the VBSPCA Medical Clinic Monday through Friday between 1-2:30pm. No appointment is necessary. The VBSPCA cannot see adopted animals for any concerns that arise outside of the 10 day window, and the pet should be seen by your regular veterinarian at your own expense. Any other medical concerns outside of post surgical or upper respiratory must be addressed by your own veterinarian.

My new pet needs additional vaccines. Where should I have these completed?

If your pet was too young to receive a rabies vaccine at the time of adoption, that rabies vaccine will be completed by a shelter veterinarian when the pet is between 14 and 16 weeks of age. If you are taking the animal home before he/she is of age, you will receive a voucher to return to the VBSPCA and have this vaccination done when they are old enough. The shelter cannot complete any other vaccines after a pet has been adopted, so you should plan to contact your veterinarian.

Where should I go for training advice or obedience issues?

Check out the VBSPCA Pet Academy! With puppy training, dog training, private training, and specialty workshops, the Pet Academy offers the opportunity to improve the life of your own pet while also supporting the animals of the VBSPCA. Puppy and dog courses are four weeks long with one class each week, and new sessions start every few weeks. You can find more information at vbpc.com/petacademy. Also note: Puppy Training is included in your adoption fee!

If you have any further questions:

Please contact us at adoptions@vbspca.com or 757-427-0070.

Thank you for providing a forever home, we are always here to help!