

How to Introduce Your Cat to a New Diet

There are many misconceptions on how to properly introduce a cat to a new diet. Although some cats are very happy to try something new, and have no problem switching to a new flavor or texture, other cats seem to show much resistance to any change in their normal routine. It is important to remember that cats, as a species, are generally suspicious of new items and it can take many times of seeing and smelling these new foods for them to agree to try them. For this reason, simply offering one can of a new diet on one occasion and watching your kitty defiantly turn her nose up at it, is just not enough of a "try" to determine if she will ultimately accept it.

1. You should not completely get rid of the old diet at first. Make sure that when acquiring the new diet you also still have several cans or a partial bag of the old diet available.

2. You should NOT mix the new food together with the old food. The best way to understand why not to do this, is to think about how much you like pizza and how much you also like chocolate ice cream. Even though you find both of these foods delicious, you would not want to mash them up together and eat them in one bite!

3. Start by just offering the old food and the new food on separate dishes or in separate bowls. It is important the bowls that you do use are of the same type. You do not want your cat to refuse the new diet because you offered it on paper instead of on ceramic. You can put all of the choices out "buffet style". Remember on the first day, or even for the first week, the kitty may not choose to try the new food. The important thing is that she keeps seeing it offered and has the chance to smell it and inspect it. She may even take a small taste of it and then leave the rest. This does not mean that she will not eventually accept it. Just keep offering it along side the old food.

4. If your kitty takes to the new food with gusto, then you can remove the old diet and you are done! If he is a little more cautious, then just keep offering until some of it is eaten. Once he has started to eat some of that food, you should slowly offer less and less of the old diet and more of the new diet with each offering until eventually the new diet is the only thing being offered. This entire process can take a few weeks.

5. If after several weeks of trying you have absolutely no luck in getting your kitty to agree to the new food, then you should talk to your vet about trying something different. There are almost always many options from which to choose and the vet can suggest a different diet if the first choice was not a success.

