



## Is My New Cat a Wallflower?

Congratulations! You just adopted a new cat but now that you're home and settled in, where did they go? Do you have an 'under-the-bed' cat? What about a 'closet' cat? Maybe even an 'in-your-bedspring' cat? There are two types of cats: 'tree dwellers' and 'bush dwellers.' Tree dwellers like high places, obviously. But bush dwellers tend to be the cats that like to hide in spots on the ground, places that are similar to caves or bushes but are in your home. They may hide when they are stressed or not feeling confident and safe. Areas where bush dwellers find security can range from places like under furniture, in bedding for hiding, or even in cardboard boxes. You can think of these cats as having a wallflower type personality.

Your new cat may not be a social butterfly yet, but there are ways that you can help them feel more confident in their new home. It's important to realize that hiding can be perfectly normal when bringing a new cat home; it can just take time for them to become comfortable, or that may just be their personality. If you do have a cat that is more of a wallflower, there are some simple things you can do to make their life with you more enjoyable.

It is important to remember that your new cat is getting used to you and your people, your home, and any other animals living in it. Your new cat is taking in all of the sights, smells and sounds that they are not accustomed to and this process can be overwhelming at first. If you aren't sure if your cat is a wallflower personality type, give them some time to settle in to your home. Depending on the individual cat, this can take a couple days, weeks, and in some cases months before they are more trusting of their environment and you.

### Benefits

If you have discovered that your new cat is a wallflower, here are some great perks to having one in your home!

- Your new wallflower cat might not be the type that will keep you up at night with kitty zoomies around your home.
- They also might not be knocking things off counters or getting into trouble the way you may have experienced with more outgoing and busy cats.
- If you prefer a cat that is not constantly underfoot, a wallflower cat tends to be a bit more independent and keeps to themselves. Enjoy the moments they do come to you for interaction.

### Recommendations

Now that you know the benefits of having a wallflower cat, how do you help them feel safe and build their confidence in your home? If you are not sure how to meet your wallflower cat's needs or how to make your home a more enjoyable place for them, here are some helpful tips!

- It is important to allow your bush dweller or wallflower cat to hide. This is a way to help decrease stress and feel safe. But try to provide them with a hiding space where it's easy to monitor them--like a cardboard box or a cat carrier with a blanket covering. (Crouching under your bed with a flashlight is not an easy routine for you to maintain!)

- With wallflower cats, it is crucial you follow these steps in providing them with a small room for at least 2 weeks. Wallflowers can be a little more sensitive and may need longer than 2 weeks, so allow your new cat to let you know when they are ready to transition to a bigger space.
- Once your new cat has transitioned to a bigger space, create dens around your house, especially in the main living areas so your new cat can have options and enjoy the same spaces with you. Over time, being in those areas with you will help create a better bond. Don't be surprised if you soon see another side of your kitty!
- Try not to take it personally! Cats are sensitive to environmental changes and you are still a stranger to them. To help create a bond, try to discover what makes your cat open up a bit more (wet food, treats, catnip, etc.) and never try to force an interaction with them.
- Give it time! Cats need to decompress when they arrive in a new home and often this requires more than just a few weeks.

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