
Dealing With Slightly Stand-offish or Slightly Shy Cat (Nonaggressive Cats) White Mountain Bengals

This is a quick how-to guide on how to deal with a slightly stand-offish cat or shy cat. Some descriptions of such cats are, those who prefer to spend time with their cat pals than you, run when you come in the room, hide, prefer to be admired from a far, and so on....

This is helpful ESPECIALLY with new kittens and cats entering a new home. This can help with cats that show some aggressive tendencies but there will be a slight difference between dealing with a cat that bites and claws to protect you, reduce stress for the cat, and will take a bit longer to deal with. Look for another short article on that named "Dealing With Aggressive Cats".

If done properly, this should help skittish cats acclimate to the home and new owners, so that everyone can live in harmony.

Step 1 Purchase a multi-level cat cage on Amazon or some of the other online retailers. These cages are priced between \$100.00 - \$150.00. This will help with the process and is a versatile tool to have around if you ever need to confine your cat for whatever reason (medical or otherwise).

Step 2 Start by placing kitty in a bathroom, depending on how skittish the kitty is. If your kitty is so skittish they are binging off of walls, curtains, and panicking to get out or away from you, then start with the article "Dealing with Very Skittish Cats". Hiding behind the toilet is okay for this method.

Step 3 Spend time in the bathroom with the kitty. Do not grab at the kitty or force yourself onto the kitty. Let kitty walk around you and check you out on their own terms. Play with a wand toy and let kitty come to you over time to play. I find that rubbing the feather/bell end of the wand toy on the floor works with some cats, and actually using the other end works with other cats (some don't like the bells). You can also add some cat nip to the floor or their bed. You will want to head into the bathroom every day, several times a day, and continue this.

A stress plug-in is recommended to help calm kitty both in the bathroom and in the rest of your home!

NOTE: You are looking for cues that your cat is more and more comfortable with your presence. They will start to come and play with the toy while you play with it. They might run towards it to play then run off and be shy again. This will slowly start to happen (play) more and more as the cat becomes comfortable with you. Talk calmly and softly, but again, do not reach for the cat! Continue this daily and always leave on a good note, not on a negative one!

Step 4 Once your cat is playing with you and getting closer and closer, you can start to try and extend a hand to touch your new kitty. Do this slowly. Again, they may run, but should come back to play with the toy. Do not chase/follow your cat around the bathroom forcing attention. Once you have a cat comfortable enough to come near you while you're playing with a wand toy, you will be able to successfully work this step. Every time kitty comes back to play with the wand toy, let them chase for a while and then again, reach out to try and touch kitty. You can also skip every other time kitty plays with the wand toy if it looks like kitty is regressing! Keep an eye out for body language and how kitty is acting.

Step 5 Once your kitty can be pet and rubbed, loved on, and so on inside the bathroom, the next step is to use that multi-level cage! You have made kitty comfortable with you in a very controlled environment, and now you want kitty to be comfortable in the rest of your house. I recommend covering the sides and back of the cage and having only the front exposed. Put kitty in a part of your house where they can observe the comings and goings. Use a baby gate if necessary to keep dogs a few feet away from kitty cage and ensure they don't harass kitty. When you're in the room with kitty, talk to kitty calmly, and again, play with the wand toy where kitty can see you. You can play with other cats as well and watch new kitty for their response. They should be watching the toy and when they're really comfortable they may jump from shelf to shelf trying to get at the toy while you play with your other cats. You want to go over to kitty and play with kitty as well. Bring wand toy and have kitty chase wand toy through the bars of the cage. Open the door (don't let kitty escape) and pet kitty through the door. Again, don't force, go slow. After enough time, kitty should be resting on the platforms of the cage without cowering and hiding when other pets and people come into the room. Have other members of the family play with the wand toys as well, and try to approach kitty slowly.

Step 6 As kitty gets comfortable and stops cowering in the cage when people come by and pets come by, you know you are ready to let kitty out. Those cages typically have two sets of doors, one on the bottom and one on the top. Open the bottom set of doors and ensure you have a cat tree or two in the room you let kitty out in so they can also be up high if they so choose. Leave the cage in the room with the litterbox, bed, food and water so that kitty has a known "safe place". You should follow the procedure you did in the bathroom and keep an eye to ensure kitty isn't regressing. If they stay hidden for days at a time go back to the cage and next time you try out of cage time, do so in a smaller room (guest bedroom/office/etc).

While it's hard to say how long this whole procedure will take, it so far has worked for every cat I have tried it on. It may be as quick as a few weeks, or, for more difficult kitties, it could take months! Do not give up on your kitty. Give them time, patience, and understanding. Don't push to the next step if your cat isn't completely comfortable with the previous one.

Look for and read your cats' body language. Cowering, pinning themselves in the back of the cage, ears back, eyes wide are all signs your kitty is afraid. Do not push at times like this or you will wind up damaging any progress you have made.

Stay positive and optimistic and you should have great results with this method!