
Dealing with Very Skittish Cats (Nonaggressive Cats)

White Mountain Bengals

The more skittish the kitty, the better the cage is, as when they get scared they can flail, jump, run and hurt themselves trying to get as far away from you as possible, and even in a room as small as a bathroom. Make sure to have a bed, food and water bowls, and some toys/treats around. Make sure you already purchase a multi-level cat cage. These can be purchased on Amazon, Chewy, or other places online for \$100.00 - \$150.00 if not less.

Place kitty in the multi-level cat cage and place cage in a quiet room, like a spare bedroom or your bedroom; somewhere that they won't be harassed by the other animals, children (just yet), and where you can sit in the room with them. We recommend the use of calming plug-ins to help with this time. There are calming sprays that can also be sprayed on kitty's bed as well. Once you find the perfect spot for the cage, go into the room and sit next to the cage, not super close to where the cat is pinned against the wire on the other side, but close enough where kitty can see you. Talk calmly and play with a cat wand in front of new kitty.

Observe your new kitty's reaction to you being there. If your kitty is pinned against the wire of the cage as far away as they can get from you, try sitting further away.

If you have another very calm cat, you can try to (sit further from new kitty's cage) bring that cat in to play with the toy, but only do this if you know your new kitty isn't petrified of other cats. Sitting in the room calmly playing with a cat toy will slowly get your new kitty used to seeing you and they will realize you are not a threat.

You will eventually start seeing kitty more comfortable (look at eyes, ears, posture). If your kitty has ears pinned, head and body lowered to the ground/shelf, big eyes with pinned ears, or is cowering in the back or corner of the cage then your kitty is afraid. Do not push kitty, but show understanding and respect, and work from afar until you are seeing your kitty open up and become more comfortable with your presence. Your kitty will eventually sit up, have ears forward, and eyes more relaxed. They won't pin against the back of the cage and will seem more intrigued with you rather than afraid.

You may start seeing kitty watch the toy as you move it around the floor. Try both sides of the wand toy (front with feathers and bell, and back). As they get more comfortable, raise the toy in the air and see if they start looking at the toy and following it. Once you get cues your cat is no longer scared of your presence and the toy, you can move closer and closer to the cage.

Again, don't reach for kitty or force physical contact with kitty. This will cause more harm than good. Although flooding is a good psychological way to deal with phobias in some situations, it can leave a cat feeling worse about the experience. As time goes on, you can try to waive the wand toy closer to the cage. Your goal is to be able to get new kitty to be able to handle close presence and respond to the toy without cowering.

It's important to take cues from your cat and not push. I can't stress this enough. It can be frustrating because some days it will seem like you're making a lot of progress, and other days it'll seem like you took steps back. Patience is key!

Once kitty is playing with the wand toy and enjoying the attention without cowering during these sessions, you are ready to move on to the next steps. From here, you will want to read and follow "[Dealing With Slightly Stand-offish or Slightly Shy Cat \(Nonaggressive Cats\)](#)".

Keep in mind, if your new kitty cannot handle the next step without acting extremely skittish, go back and spend some more time in the cage step.

The goal isn't to rush these steps to get it over faster, the goal is to go slow and have patience, understanding, and love for your new kitty, and eventually your new kitty will come around. Living in a state of stress and anxiety isn't healthy for your kitty, and this will help them feel more comfortable with you and in your home.