

This is a summary (lol) of what Wizz was telling me to do and what happened ie emails to and fro . It's a long read but def well worth reading it all cause it will help.

Rio was the older, resident cat and was the one who was scared of little new comer Gizmo whom we got after Ochi Rio's brother got killed RTA. He stayed outside and would not come in the house at all for about 2 weeks. It was very upsetting to see Rio like that so I sort the help of an excellent cat behaviorist called Wizz – Wizz cat rescue & professional cat behaviorist .

Wizz (behaviourist) parts in blue my responses in black..



Gizmo



Rio

The most important part is to separate them totally, wash hands and face after you have been with one so the other cat doesn't smell him on you at all. No face to face contact with Newcomer what so ever until older cat is happy again feeling on her own in the house. Then slowly introduce smells only still not actual or face contact. Then if all goes well after a week or two with that then introduce small introductions under supervision.

The idea is each cat gets used to the smell of the other before any "sightings" so when they do meet they are already used to each others smell.

Each stage can take a while and at the cats own pace but the longer and more patience you have the better they will have a hope to be happy together.

Overall it took about 6 weeks for Rio not to be scared of Gizmo and happy together but it worked!!!

Hi Tan

Lovely to speak to you. I'll just give you a few quick notes to start you off and put some stuff in the post to you.

Giz: Set him up in his own room, tray, food, toys, bed, - he will be used to having his siblings around him so a few toys placed in his bed will comfort him. You will probably be able to hear him playing, he will have a set routine of play/sleep/toilet so you will be able to 'allocate' some time to him while he is awake. Leave a radio or TV on if you think it will help him. Try not to let him use you as 'prey' - normally kittens would fight with each other and when it gets too rough one of them will squeal and the game stops - thus they learn that biting and scratching is not nice - if we don't deter this then you will end up with an aggressive adult cat.

Rio - need to re-establish your relationship with this little man. Spend as much time as you can with him - but not necessarily interacting with him. Let him come to you. Cut his food down so that he has to come to you. At the moment he is expecting little Giz to come at him from every angle - it won't take him long before he realises that it is 'safe' to come back indoors. I think it would be wise to fence off your garden then this could become an 'extension' of your house. The more 'space' they have the better it will be for them. I have attached a picture of my pen for you - you will notice that there are shelves inside and out - most cats love to be high up. You could also make little 'cat boxes' for them to sleep in and attach them to the fence - may need some support underneath - mine take just one cat - so no sharing! I also bought a child's wooden bench which fits cats just nicely! In the summer I put cushions and that out but obviously that's not possible during the winter, so you have to make sure the basics are preserved. I also have 'shelves' on my fencing so the cats can sun themselves, and they get on to the roof of the cat pens. You can make little ramps all sorts!

I have an area with bark chippings which the cats seem to love to toilet in! Then I also have an area where I use a biodegradable paper litter - I treat these areas like trays, and scoop the poop every so often. I have it slightly raised so there is a brick surround and the 'litter' is below the bricks so it doesn't get kicked out on the rest of the garden. We also have a saw mill near us and I have got some nice large pieces of tree - much cheaper than scratching posts!

The website that does the outdoor/indoor activity centres is www.catplay-stations.com there might be something on there to give you some ideas.

More to follow in the post!

Love Wizz xx

Hi Thanks. Have moved Giz into the spare room (he seemed very happy there and I stayed and played with him until he got tired) The downstairs is back to normal as Rio is used to with the patio doors open. It has been pouring here but he still won't come in and is hiding under the wheelbarrow! He did come looking for food before the rain and I have taken all this up and tried to talk him to coming in to eat but he was not having any of it so I have not given him any. Have been out and stroked him and he did come up to me.

Oh wow as I was typing this, he has just walked in and is eating in the kitchen. God what a relief, a big weight off my mind and it feels great to get some of the old routine and some of boy back. Thanks so very much. I know we still have a way to go but this is great for him to come in for the 1st time in a long time just by moving Giz into his own room!.

Tan - you can move Rio's tea time so once he's had his tea he is in - my girls have a 6pm curfew and the boys are allowed out until a bit later - this is because the girls are part feral and would stay out all night given the choice! So you could move his tea time to say, 7.30pm, or feed him very little in the afternoon so he is hungry in the evenings. I only feed mine twice a day, 6am and 6pm, then when I'm locking up in the evening they have a choice, they can either come in the house or go in to one of the sleeping compartments in the garden. Often with the cats the more you try to get them in, the more they avoid it.

Hope you get him in tonight! Speak soon!

Rio came back quite quickly and sat in his pot. The pot is on the chair by the patio door which in summer is normally always open as it's so humid. This is his normal thing he does before I get him in ever since he was allow out after being neutered. The time that I have been getting him in varies in summer and winter so depends on the daylight time and as he has always been in his pot where I can see him getting him in has never been a prob so I must admit I have let him sit there. But yes I will definitely start feeding him twice a day, in am and bring him straight in at half 7 for his dinner.

I have fed him a mo ago with some ham by hand (usual for him) then picked him up and put him on his cat tree in the lounge. He stretched and has now slowly gone upstairs then has come back down and started crying in a desperate fashion which he normally does when he wants to go to the loo. He doesn't use his litter tray so should I ignore him and hope he will use it? Is that right?

He may have sensed that little Giz is upstairs - he won't know that Giz can't actually get to him, so his immediate reaction will be 'I know he's up here so let me out!' Yes I'm afraid you may have a couple of sleepless nights in front of you - I put all mine either in their pens, or in the kitchen/outdoor pen - because I need my sleep. Ebony bless her - my little feral - she does play and run up and down the stairs at night, but she doesn't jump on the bed or yowl. She sleeps on the window sill behind me and is usually well behaved! You may as a last resort want to put him in the kitchen if he is driving you completely round the bend. From a behavioural point of view its ignore bad behaviour, reward good - so if he's crying at you for attention you ignore him, when he's quiet and sat nicely, you reward him by stroking him - that kind of thing. As long as Rio's tray is somewhere quiet, if he's desperate he should use it - having said that I have had cats that absolutely refuse to use a tray - poor Simon nearly burst something when he was in the vets after he's had his leg amputated - they said he could only go home after he'd had a wee - I said you'll be waiting a long time then!

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Hiya

Poor ole Simon!

Had a pretty good night sleep! Rio (nick name -Wizzer waddle - don't ask where that comes from!) settled down with me on the bed then slept on the landing outside Giz's room. I felt he had the attitude last nite when he came in "good got rid of him then have you" !!! He didn't seem to notice Giz was tucked away instead!!! Ha ha ha (evil laugh) fool you then!

He woke me up this morning as usual to go out but this time it was hour early at 5am so I managed to last till half 5 then took him outside and he went to the loo. Played with him for half hour then got him back in with some food. I have let him back out in the garden (9am) with the lounge doors open as he is used to and he is sleeping under the towel on the chair. ... update ... he was sleeping, he just went for a silly pigeon who landed right by him!!

..... and half hour later after play time was requested!

Little Giz was all over me this am when I went in about half 6. We had a good play and some breakfast then he started to knead and suckle in my neck which he hadn't done before. It's just so sad that these little babes are taken away from their mum when they need her.

Hi Things going better. Rio is still a bit weary and has cried a bit at night after I have brought him in but we have ignored him and he has settled for every night in our bedroom. He still prefers to be in the garden for the day is coming in to eat and for playtime request.

He hasn't settled in the lounge when we are there in the evening yet. He either used to sleep on his cat tree or in the cardboard box in the lounge but prefers to go upstairs. Before, he did sometimes choose to sleep upstairs in the eve so I wouldn't say this was totally unlike him! He is sniffing things out in the lounge.

He seems more relaxed but still moping a bit which is what he was like before Giz arrived.

Giz on the other hand is now called "Ginge Ninge". He has no fear of anything! I am going into see him every 2 hours and playing until he settles to sleep. Am I going in enough? I am washing my hands and face every time etc. He does seem to be getting clingy and lonely in there. He has started to suckle at my neck on occasions. Should we be letting Giz and his smell out only upstairs a bit as long as they do not see each other at all? He did nip out dashed into our bedroom when I went into see him at one point yesterday and I thought Rio would smell him and then not come into our bedroom but Rio settled as usual on his cat tree in there and then on the bed with me all night. Phew that was a relief!! Oh to have my Rio's happy face back and happily playing with Giz!

Yes you can start to let Giz out into the rest of the house - if you can shut off downstairs then all the better.

What you are aiming for is that Giz is confident in all areas of the house but without confronting Rio at this point - if you see Rio reacting adversely to Giz's smell then we have a problem! What you can do, when you see Rio 'sniffing' around where Giz has been - he may well have his mouth slightly open so he can 'taste' the smell as well. If Rio is particularly partial to anything like ham, then this would be a good time to praise and reward him, so he has a good association with the smell.

You will have to judge for yourself really how Rio is doing as he is your cat and you know him better than anyone. Its quite normal for Giz to be 'clingy' part of growing up is realising that 'mum' isn't around 24/7 - if he'd been rehomed to a 'normal' home where they are out for 8 - 10 hours a day, he would have something to complain about!

After I emailed you Sat, I got Wizzer in and took him into the kitchen where he ate then he came back into the lounge and sat on his box. He did cry, not a normal Rio cry but a "I'm not happy" one. This is where he feels safer as it is higher. He ended up grooming then sleeping on it, then came up to bed sometime in the night. Wow a break thought I thought!

Until yesterday when he stayed out all day as usual, then after I got him in last night and he ate, he went tried to get out and then went upstairs and tried to hide again. We have space in the bed base opened and went to go in there which he had never done before. He ended up sleeping in my cupboard draw till the usual thing of me taking him out at half 5 in morning.

He has come in this am through cat flap on his own and eaten then has slept on his cat tree in the bedroom. I was in with Giz at the time. When I came out of the spare room he followed me downstairs and cried to go out even though his cat flap was open. He followed me back upstairs slowly at sat at the top stair then sniffed at the bottom of Giz's door, then got into the cupboard again. He there sleeping now and I have shut our bedroom door with him in it so I could let Giz out as he was crying.

Is it ok to be shutting Rio in the bed room in that situation (i.e he went there out of his decision etc)

Actually have now felt bad about this and as Giz started to go to sleep in the lounge, just put Giz back in the spare room to sleep and opened up our bedroom. Wizzer was still and is still in my cupboard!

I have tried to give him some ham when he was in the house and sniffing but he isn't interested at all.

Was a bit down last nite when I went to bed. The worse time is when I go to sleep as me Ochi would come to bed with me. But also cause I feel I have done this completely wrong. I should have given Rio more time before adopting a cat companion for him. I feel as if I have failed Rio cause he feels scared in his own home now as well as all his cat friends and Bro have gone.

I feel I have failed Giz cause as he is so young and he has to spend time in the spare room on his own and doesn't like it. I feel he is getting very dependant on me for company and play etc and so causing him to have behaviour problems too!

Hi

Rio is doing better every day. Today he came in and out 4 times today by himself to eat and when he was sniffing in the lounge, he had his tail in an upward arc like one of the pics in the tail signals bit you sent me. He's asleep on my side of the bed now after staying down with me in the lounge snoozing on his box for a bit. Definitely more relaxed in the house. He still would prefer to stay out in the garden longer at night which he can do when the cat fences are up but I would prefer as we discussed to bring him in as usual and open the flap after he has settled so he can go out later when he wants to.

Good thing is that as the shorter evenings draw in, I don't have to worry about bringing him in earlier in the winter months and know he will be safe too!

We have been bringing Giz out to have the run of the whole of the house every 2 hours and putting him back when Rio wants to come in or when he is sleepy. His smell is definitely all over now.

Must admit I feel a bit sorry for Rio when they do get together, he will have to tell Giz off quite a bit I think. Giz is a mad attacking ninja at mo! Hopefully he might calm down a bit!!!

That's brilliant Tan - if you want you can put Giz in a cat carrier and just leave him in the living room - best to do it after you've had a big play and he is tired - if they ever get tired!! Then let Rio into the room - place the carrier on a chair - not at ground level and let Rio come in as usual - hopefully Giz may be asleep and Rio will go up and sniff him - I think it's best to contain Giz in this instance so that if Rio is not at all happy you can quickly and easily remove Giz from the situation and not one gets attacked.

You need to watch Rio's body language very carefully here - then you do it when Giz is well and truly awake - he will probably start pawing to get out of the carrier - and again watch to see if Rio wants to play with him, or just walks away. Again this is something you will have to judge for yourself as I can't be there to watch the signals for you - watch the ears too - if Rio flattens his ears in attack mode then remove Giz - basically the flatter the ears the more dangerous the situation. They only truly flatten the ears down when they are about to attack - they do this to protect their ears and keep them out of the way!

Rio must feel that he is in charge - so continue mixing the scents you are doing brilliantly and your patience will be rewarded

We'll have moved on a bit not sure if it's a step back or not? This am put a sleeping Giz in the basket in his room and opened the door with Rio in the hall. Giz of course woke up and started to cry and paw to get out. Rio sat on the top stair and watched quite calmly until my hubby came up the stairs to go to the loo and Rio went down them to go out the flap. He didn't actually go out so I brought Giz down to the lounge still in the carrier and Rio sat on the bottom stair peeking round the corner at the box and the crying sounds coming from it. He went up slowly sniffing but lowered back. Then turned and went out the flap.

I went out to give Rio some fussing and play time in the garden and Steve let Giz out in the lounge. Rio was quite happy in the garden and back to his calm self as soon as he got out of the door.

Later on, brought Rio in for some food and beforehand put Giz in the carrier which was still in the lounge. Giz was quiet this time. Took Rio into the kitchen but he wasn't interested in any food and as he walked out the kitchen he saw Giz just sat in the carrier. He watched him a bit, his tail was up. I tried to give him some tuna or ham and lots of strokes by the capflap. He wasn't interested in eating at all. I went up to the bedroom as I didn't want him having to go out of his home every time he got scared. He followed me up and was perfectly fine on the bed with me for a while.

Then, as he hasn't really been in Giz's room yet, I sat in there tempting him to come in and play which he did come in and sniff around, tail up, no crouching, and then watched me play with his toy a bit then went down and out. Again he was fine in the garden, happy that I went out to him, so we had another play.

Rio is not aggressive at all he is frightened of Giz! I must admit, when I take him out the front at half 5 in the morning he sticks to me like glue while we are in the cul de sac and seems scared of any cat about. But in the garden he's fine. Would Rescue remedy help him not be so scared? I can't get over that fact he's scared of Giz. I thought as he is smaller than him, he would be a threat!

I am spending most of my time splitting my attention and playing with each of them separately, not having much time for working!! They both rely on me for attention. If this takes quite a while for Rio to accept Giz, will they get jealous if they are both relying on me only!

Do ya think I should carry on with the Giz in the carrier thing on occasion or go back to them not meeting at all? Is there anything else I can help Rio to not be so scared?

Usually with kittens it is easier to restrain them in a carrier so the cat gets used to them being around - but as you say - Rio seems to be particularly nervous. I'm not convinced with RR but it certainly won't do him any harm! I think your best method with Rio being as he is - is to use distraction techniques on the kitten - we need to be careful now not to go too long before they are together, as this can be just as bad as too soon! Try feeding Giz in the basket and Rio close to him - see if he will eat in Giz's presence

Morning Wizz

That sounds a lot better than my hubbies suggestion of shutting them in the same room then going out to the pub!!
I don't really blame Rio of being scared of Spitty gitty, he is a mad little thing but very lovable

Wizzer waddle and me (the mad cat lover in our road) was out as usual this am at half 5. Getting very cold at that time now brrrrrr!!!
Thank god the last parts of the cat fencing are ready soon and the cat flap for the back will be here in the week.
He came in by himself about half 7 while I was shut in the lounge with Ninja Mo (another name for Gizmo!) and then went out after I heard him jump off the bed upstairs. So he not scared to come in on his own which he was before. I think he does show an interest in Gizzy just that he has this expression "Holy pooey, whats that.. monster in the house ... EVACUATE"!

It's a shame Rio has never been a "oooo gimmy gimmy that food" freak he likes ham more than anything but can take it or leave it. So it's hard to distract him at all. I will get some more cat nip today as Rio sometime likes that but don't think that would be enough of a distraction from Giz. Ochi used to go mad for it and I even caught him nicking it out of the cupboard!

So at the mo we are letting Giz have the lounge in the day while keeping the curtains shut so Rio can't see him from the garden. Should I now not hide Giz from Rio and open the curtains so Rio can see him in the lounge. Or is this no good as Rio won't be in the same room and think again right not going in there then!

I think it would be better if you can use the carrier with Giz in for frequent short spells while Rio is around - even if say Rio is in the garden and you put Giz in the carrier and leave him in the kitchen where Rio can see him - main thing is Rio is in charge!

OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO Wizz

We have had a break through

They are sort of playing!! Rio is moaning and giving the odd hiss sometimes and trying to swat Giz but not actually touching him although he could give him a good smack if he wanted to! Rio seems very relaxed on the chair and has been grooming in between Giz trying to find a nice tail to get or trying to find ways up to him.

Giz just won't leave him alone! Very brave little chap!

Rio actually came in by himself this am (raining outside!!) while Giz was in the lounge.

Rio went straight into kitchen with Giz happily following and Rio actually ate some food (in between the odd growl) with Giz watching. Then Rio came back in the lounge and jumped up on chair and this has been going on for about an hour now.

Giz is being his usual cheeky self and Rio is actually enjoying the attention and looking for him!

Rio has got off the chair a few times but as he cant get out at the mo (cat flap was locked incase Giz got out) he is having to put up with him !!! Ha Ha (evil laugh) What ya reckon. Is this a good ...



Ah Bless - They are handsome boys - looks good to me - the change in weather usually accompanies a change in habits - like heading for the warm spots!

Hyla Since Friday everything has gone really well. On Friday late afternoon, I was out in the garden with Rio and I thought how would Rio react if Giz was in his garden! As it is totally fenced in and no way to get out unless over the fences, I let Giz come out with us. I was a bit worried but Rio was amazing. They ended up playing hide and seek for ages. Not one growl or hiss from Rio at all. Fantastic! It was so great to see Rio having fun "cat" playing again.

When I brought them back in for the night, Rio went back to his hissy and hidey self in the house! Weird I thought especially when he was comfortable in the garden with him.

Over the weekend they have been in the garden a lot playing and Rio has been getting a lot better in the house with him now too only the occasional moan when Giz gets too annoying!! Little git!!

Hi Wizz :) Rio comes in the house now all calm and when he wants to. Giz has tried to play with him when he was eating and Rio told him off so Giz now sits near and waits till he has finished!

I can see Rio loves all this attention, no sign of being bored at all. This morning they were both on the bed with us and Rio was grooming Giz.

Giz absolutely adores Rio. He won't leave him alone. He is like Rio's tail extension!! Rio has his places where Giz can't get to him and Giz just sits and looks at Rio waiting for him to get down. Rio now tells Giz off and lets him know he is being a pain!! Ha ha it's so great to see. Thanks sooo much.

xxx

