

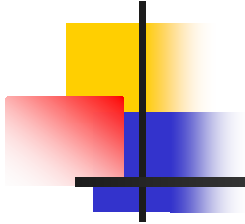
Introducing Dogs to Cats

Laura Totis of LJT Training
2010

In the “real world” cats would
be food for dogs.



Preditory or Nonaffective aggression

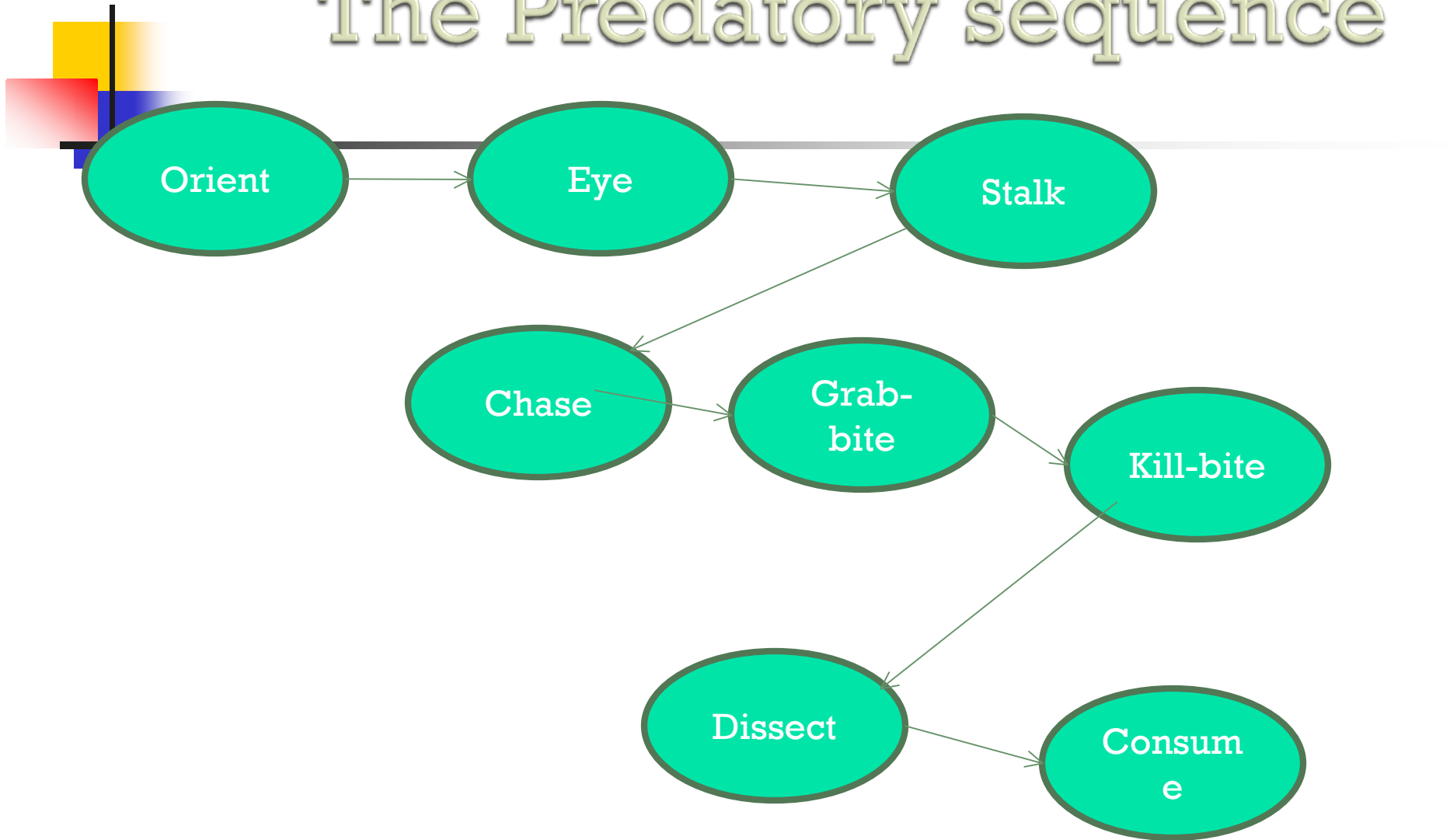


Dogs don't talk to their food so you may not see common red flag signals.

You probably will not see the dog trying to communicate with the cat.

- No growl
- No hair raised
- Unless the dog is frustrated no barking

The Predatory sequence



Adapted from Aggressive Behavior in Dogs O'heare
2007

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Fortunately with domestication
there are a number of factors
that allow dogs and cats to live in
harmony



When we talk about socializing puppies it is serious business.

The socialization period (4-12 weeks) is the time that puppies learn social skills. This is also the time to introduce them to the idea of cats as part of their social network.



To introduce puppies to cats

Start with cats that are confident and “friendly” to dogs. Big lazy friendly cats that will not jump and run away from the puppy or that will not get upset or smack a curious puppy.

- Make sure your puppy has good experiences with the cats. (The puppy is not allowed the opportunity to chase or bite the cat, so that the cat does not feel the need to discipline the puppy by swatting him.) Let the puppy meet the cat but encourage your pup to do other things besides focus on the cat. Anything else is good.
- Gradually introduce your pup to the idea of cats moving around jumping and running and doing normal cat things. Keep your puppy on a leash so that he does not have the opportunity to chase or bite a running cat or kitten. Reward your pup for doing anything besides chasing or barking at the cats and kittens.
- **USE GOOD JUDGEMENT.** if your pup and the cat are interacting nicely and they both appear amenable and your pup does not have any other behavior red flags you might let them play and interact. Do not try to force it. **NEVER** encourage the puppy to chase the cat.
- **IF** your puppy is very excited or focused on the cat do not let him play with cats. Just reinforce him for appropriate behavior around the cat. The natural level of prey drive will often determine the success of dog and cat relationships.
- **NEVER LEAVE THEM UNSUPERVISED!** Periodically practice calling your puppy to you to distract him from focusing on the cat.



Adult Dogs & Cats

- If you do not know the history of the dog you are introducing **BE CAREFUL!!**
- Use your judgment – Control the environment.
- How big is the dog what is the potential of the dog to do damage? A big playful puppy with an uninhibited bite can accidentally break a cat while playing.
- If at any time you see the dog begin the predatory sequence **STOP.**

These cats ended up sharing their small apartment with a retired racing greyhound. - sometimes there are no hard and fast rules.





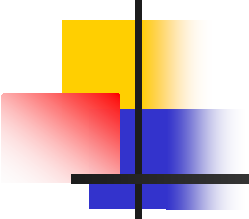
Control the situation at all times

- Put the dog on a leash or in a crate
- Put the cat up high in a crate
- What is your dogs reaction to the cat is he oblivious – that may mean he does not care about cats, or it may mean the cat needs to move in order to be interesting.
- What is your cat's reaction to the dog. Sometimes a savvy cat will adjust his behavior around the dog so you can tell if he is nervous or comfortable.

The Process I use to introduce dogs to my cat.

1. Dog in the room that the cat has been removed from
2. Cat in crate dog brought into the room on leash
3. Dog in crate cat loose in the room
4. Dog in crate or baby gated and on leash in another room while cat runs jumps and plays
5. Dog on a leash to meet the cat (The dog might be wearing a muzzle- but must be introduced to the muzzle, first and separate from the cat.)
6. The dog's may act differently toward the cat inside the house than they do outside the house. In other words the dog is fine with the cat inside but treats the cat like a squirrel outside.

If at anytime in the process I see the dog start any step of the predatory sequence we are DONE.



Put the cat in the room then
remove the cat before the dog
comes in.

- Is the dog interested in the scent of the cat?
- Is the dog “hunting” the cat?
- Does the dog not notice the scent of the cat?
- Does the dog notice but not care?



Cat in crate dog brought into the room on leash

- Does the dog have more important things to think about?
- Is the dog interested?
- Is the dog focused intently on the cat.
- Does the dog respond to you at all when he sees the cat?



Dog in crate cat loose in the room

- Does the dog have more important things to think about?
- Is the dog interested?
- Is the dog focused intently on the cat.
- Does the dog respond to you at all when he sees the cat?



Put the dog in a crate or behind a baby gate on a leash

- What is the dog's reaction when the cat moves? What about when the cat jumps or runs?
 - Does the dog have more important things to think about?
 - Is the dog interested?
 - Is the dog focused intently on the cat.
 - Does the dog respond to you at all when he sees the cat?



Dog on a leash to meet the cat

(The dog might be wearing a muzzle- but must be introduced to the muzzle, first and separate from the cat.)

- Does the dog have more important things to think about?
- Is the dog interested?
- Is the dog focused intently on the cat.
- Does the dog respond to you at all when he sees the cat?

What happens if you repeat the process outside?

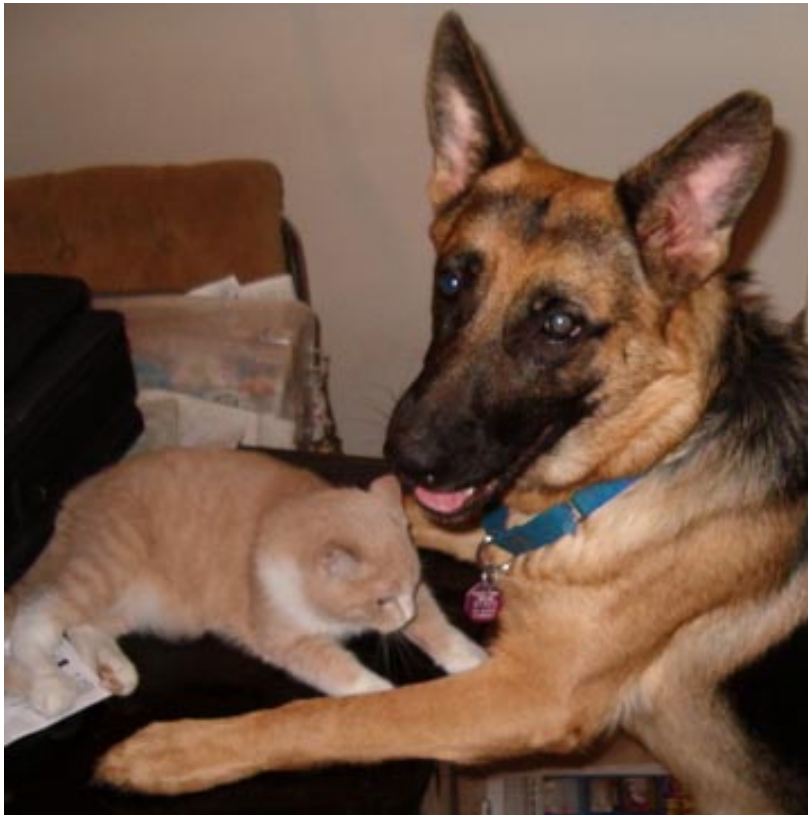


A dangerous way to test. The dog could hurt the cat before anyone could do anything.



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Notice the cat is a little cautious
with this energetic puppy. Ears
are back no eye contact.



Look at these two. The cat chased the dog
the dog chased the cat. Notice the body
language on both, the ears are relaxed.
The hair is not raised on either, the dog is
play bowing the cat



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Never introduce multiple dogs at the same time. One on one they may be fine. Together they may turn into a pack and actually kill the cat.



Rivers story...



River was found on the side of a river while we were on a camping trip. I introduced him to a pack of dogs. Several of which had a history of killing cats.

We took our time the cat spent the first year of his life in a crate when the dogs were in the house.

We never trusted the dogs with the cat or alone with the cat. If we were not home the cat was in his own room.

River introduced countless puppies to the idea that cats can be their friends. He also cat tested a number of rescues.

When introducing rescue dogs to the cat if at any of the introductory stages I was at all uncomfortable with what I saw we discontinued the test immediately. Many dogs failed my cat test that may have passed others.

River has helped trained may lost pet detection dogs. He is retired and living happily with my niece.

Access to a good dog savvy cat can make a world of difference. Do not ever do anything to traumatize your cat if he is skittery or terrified of dogs.

Management is always an option!