



## Little Bit 300558: What to Expect

**Little Bit is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home.** Little Bit is an active young cat who enjoys exploring and playing with toys. She needs to find a home with a patient person who is willing to provide her with a consistent routine and daily, interactive play sessions. Little Bit will need a home that can keep up with her energy level, one that can provide her with both physical and mental enrichment.

Little Bit was found as a stray and brought to the OHS Salem campus. While at the shelter, she exhibited frustrated behavior in her kennel, pacing, vocalizing, and taking every opportunity she could to get out of her kennel. She also bit a volunteer when they went to interact with her, and in a moment of frustration, she bit their hand when they went to pet her when she didn't want to be pet. It was a quick bite and release and did not require medical attention. It was clear that the shelter environment was not conducive to the amount of energy she had so she was transferred to the OHS Portland campus and placed in the Behavior Modification Program. This program would allow us to increase her enrichment needs with a focus on directing her behavior towards appropriate play toys and rewarding her when in a calm, relaxed state.

Little Bit acclimated very quickly to the BMOD program but it was clear she did not like to be restrained in her kennel. We would give her ample opportunities to explore the space outside of her kennel every day. She loves to explore and play, play, play. As we increased her enrichment, her frustrated behavior decreased and she started soliciting attention, leaning in for pets and following us around.

Little Bit is very active and will need a home that can keep up with her energy level, one that can provide her with both physical and mental enrichment. She does like to relax and lounge throughout the day, and it is in these moments we would reward her calm behavior with treats. A home that can provide her with increased enrichment that includes a variety of toys, scratching posts to climb on, and windows for bird watching will make her very happy. She may also do ok with safe outdoor access. Little Bit has been exposed to other cats here, and while she does ok with them, she can be a bit pushy and rough with them at times. If there is another cat in her new home, it will need to be one that can handle her bold personality.

### **Here's how to help Little Bit during your first month together:**

**Confine Little Bit to one cat-proof room in your house.** Provide Little Bit with a litter box, food, water, and a bed. Ensure she cannot get to *inappropriate* hiding spots (under the bed, in a closet, on top of a cabinet, etc.). Provide her with a safe, comfortable hiding place instead like her cat carrier, a hidey-bed, or a large dog crate covered with a blanket. Once she is using the litter box, eating regularly, and coming out of hiding to play with toys, you can start introducing her to the rest of your home.

**Enrich her space.** Little Bit loves toys, scratching posts, and perches with a window view. Giving her the opportunity to climb, jump, play, scratch and engage in natural cat behavior may help reduce overstimulated behaviors.

**Keep a routine.** A predictable daily schedule will help Little Bit settle into your home. Give her time to get to know you before introducing her to new people.

**Schedule interactive play sessions with her every day.** Little Bit needs at least 10 minutes of dedicated play in the morning and again in the evening to alleviate stress and built-up frustration. Try to mimic natural hunting behavior. Choose a fishing-pole toy and make the toy soar around the room like a bird, engaging Little Bit's attention. Or simulate

mouse activity by sliding the end of the toy around on the floor in quick, jerky movements. Allow him to pounce and catch the toy and bat it around. Then start again. End your play session by allowing him to capture the toy.

**Practice crate training.** Leave her carrier out all the time, so it's just a part of her normal environment. Add a bed and keep the door securely propped open so she can go in and out on her own, making sure the door won't swing shut and frighten her. You can also clicker train her to run into the carrier on cue. Helping Little Bit get comfortable with her carrier will make it easier when it's time to visit the vet.

### **We're here to help!**

We want Little Bit to be successful in her new home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. Call the Behavior Helpline at (503)416-2983 or email Erika at [erikas@oregonhumane.org](mailto:erikas@oregonhumane.org) to connect with the Feline Services Manager.

Please keep in touch so we can continue to help you and Little Bit now and in the future. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns – or just to give an update. We love to see photos and hear how our friends are doing!

Thank you for adopting from the Oregon Humane Society. Congratulations on your new cat!