



Jasmine 303502: What to Expect

Jasmine is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Jasmine is a sensitive, playful girl who is ready to find her forever home. Jasmine needs an understanding owner that is experienced with feline body language and has the time and desire to allow her to acclimate in her own time. Jasmine may never be a social butterfly with everyone she meets, but she will bond with someone when given the time she needs to get to know you.

Jasmine was transferred from another shelter and the information provided to us was that she was living outdoors in a community cat setting. When she arrived at the shelter she displayed fearful behavior, crouching low, hiding, and hissing when staff attempted to engage with her. After several weeks with no change in her behavior she was placed in the Behavior Modification Program. The environment in the BMOD program is more conducive to helping cats feel comfortable in a shelter environment. With the larger kennel space, access to windows, and more one on one time with the team we set out to learn more about her and help her overcome her fears.

When she first arrived in the Behavior Modification program, Jasmine hid for several days and would be wide eyed when we approached her. We worked on building trust and confidence by talking to her calmly, offering treats and getting her used to our presence by just sitting close by her. She immediately showed an interest in the other kitties in the program, so we allowed her to come out of her kennel to engage with them. We saw her behavior change from a scared, worried girl to a comfortable, confident girl anytime she had an opportunity to be around other cats. As she started to see other cats interact with us, she began to understand that we were not a threat and started playing with toys when we offered them to her. As we soared the wand toys through the air she would watch, chase and pounce on it with great delight. She then moved into our Sunroom, which is a communal room, where she could live with other cats 24/7. While in this room, we watched and observed as she climbed the cat towers to look out the windows, snuggled with the other kitties and pounced on toys with enthusiasm. The team also sat in this room with her, offering wand toys and tasty treats which she readily accepted from us. While Jasmine is comfortable being close by people, she is still very hesitant about being pet. We found early on that she does not feel comfortable when hands approach from the front or towards her head. When this would happen, she would crouch low and move away. She is much more receptive to being pet on the back while being offered a tasty treat.

Jasmine will need a family that is committed to helping her progress even more. She still has a long way to go at accepting pets and her new family should expect to work with her on this. Jasmine loves being close by people, and we are confident that one day she will be the snuggly, cuddly kitty we all want her to be. She's an active, playful girl who needs time to build confidence and trust with people. Her favorite activities are playing with toys, eating treats, and relaxing in the best sunspots. Other cats have been crucial in helping her build confidence. Jasmine will need to find a home where there is another cat for her to have as a friend.

Jasmine came to OHS with an abnormal gait. Upon further examination she was diagnosed with a condition called medial patellar luxation (MPL). This is a common condition seen in small breed dogs, and occasionally in cats, that causes a skip or limp. The severity of the MPL is graded 1-4 when diagnosed, based on the degree to which the patella is luxated. She was diagnosed with a Grade 3/4 Right MPL and Grade 2/4 Left MPL. We have performed surgery on the right knee to correct this condition due to the severity of the MPL and the amount of discomfort it was causing. She has not had surgical correction of her left knee as the MPL is less severe and not causing her any dysfunction or pain. In the future, this may need medical or surgical care if it worsens or leads to arthritis. Jasmine can now walk, run, and jump with no discomfort and she has no issues moving around. This link provides additional information on MPL:

<https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&id=4952566>

Her new family should expect that she will hide for a few weeks, possibly longer. You'll need to introduce her to new things slowly. Jasmine typically runs, hides, and hisses when overwhelmed or scared. It's important to provide her with a small room with appropriate hiding spots for her to relax in, such as her own hidey bed. Hiding spots that are confined to a tight spot and out of reach from you will make it difficult to build a bond with her. **She should not be given access to the whole home setting until she has acclimated to one room. The room you set her up in will be the catalyst for how quickly she acclimates.** Start thinking now which room in your home would be best for Jasmine to settle into. If it's a bedroom, can she get under the bed or dresser making it difficult to spend time with her? If it's a laundry room or bathroom will the constant in and out of people and noises associated with these rooms be too much for her? By having a room without a lot of foot traffic and with appropriate hiding spots, it will allow you to work on building a relationship. While in her hiding spot, use calm voices and offer tasty treats and toys to show you are not a threat. Place a small amount of a wet food or a treat on a spoon and offer it to Jasmine while in her hidey spot. Over time, by continuing to do this, Jasmine will become more comfortable and recognize that yummy food/playtime = people, therefore creating a positive association between the two.

Here's how to help Jasmine during your first months together:

This step is crucial in helping Jasmine acclimate to her new home. Confine Jasmine to one cat-proof room in your house. Provide Jasmine 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.

Spend time with Jasmine in her room. Don't force her out of her hiding spot. Instead, encourage her to come out on her own using happy talk, offering a toy or treats. Once she is using the litter box, eating regularly, and coming out of hiding to interact with you, you can start introducing her to the rest of your home. Start by propping the door open and allowing her to come out on her own. Don't force it! If you come across something that you can tell Jasmine is worried about, allow her to hang back or hide if she chooses to do so.

Continue to provide a safe space. Even when Jasmine has started exploring the rest of the house, give her a safe space that she can retreat to. When she is in her safe space, insist that guests leave her alone and try to ignore her yourself. That way, when she comes out, you can reward her bravery with your attention.

No visitors (at first). Allow Jasmine time to adjust to your house, routine, and lifestyle before introducing her to new people. When you have visitors over, give Jasmine the freedom to make the decision to interact (or not!). Ask new people to ignore her – or if Jasmine seems curious or interested, have the new person toss her treats or offer a favorite toy. We want exciting, good things to come from new people.

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 Jasmine get comfortable with her carrier will make it easier when it's time to visit the vet.

Visiting the vet: Unless it's an emergency, give Jasmine time to bond to you before taking her to the vet. Vet visits will more than likely be scary, but if she already trusts you, your presence may help her feel more comfortable.

Patience will come in handy for you. Jasmine is a cat that needs an understanding owner who has the time and desire to allow her to adapt in her own time. She may never be a social butterfly, and that's okay! Getting to know her and watching her come out of her shell will be extremely rewarding. Celebrate those small victories.

We're here to help!

We want Jasmine 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 to connect with the Feline Services Manager.

Please keep in touch so we can continue to help you and Jasmine 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!