



## Miss T. Ray 304793: What to Expect

Miss T. Ray is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Miss T. Ray is a shy, sweet girl who is ready to find her forever home. She will take some time to acclimate to a new home but once she does, you'll end up with a very sweet, affectionate and snuggly girl.

Miss T. Ray was transferred to OHS from another shelter in April of this year, so we did not have much history on her when she arrived. When she first arrived, she displayed fearful, shy behavior and was overwhelmed with all the noises and movements associated with a shelter environment. Over the last several months she was in a few different foster homes which allowed us to learn more about her and understand her fears. She would hide for a few weeks in the foster home, taking refuge in a hidey bed and only coming out to explore her surroundings at night. Miss T. Ray never showed aggressive behavior to people and would allow people to pet and brush her while she was in her hidey bed. As she started to understand the routine and got to know her foster parent, she became braver and started leaning in for cheek and chin scratches and her purr motor came out. When she finally came out of her room, it was sudden and decisive; she was immediately at ease in the whole home. Once she has accepted you, she is very affectionate, loves pets and sitting on your lap but does not enjoy being picked up. Miss T. Ray is not overly active and is happy to just relax and nap in the best sunspots. She has met several cats and dogs in her foster home but was not a fan of them. She will need to be the only pet in her new home. She would love an owner who is willing to sit with her and snuggle, someone that has time to give her all the pets she deserves.

When it was time for Miss T. Ray to come back to the shelter for adoption she was placed in the Behavior Modification Program. We already knew that the shelter environment was overwhelming for her and 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 gave her time to acclimate to the new routine and make new friends. She continues to love being pet and brushed and her favorite treats are Churus. She's now ready to leave the shelter world behind and find her new forever home.

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. Miss T. Ray typically hides when overwhelmed or scared. If cornered, she may hiss and cower, so it's important to not overwhelm her as she adjusts to her new home. 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 Miss T. Ray 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 to show you are not a threat. She enjoys being pet, even when in her hidey bed so pet her gently as you sweet talk to her. Over time, by continuing to do this, Miss T. Ray will become more comfortable and recognize that yummy food/gentle petting = people, therefore creating a positive association between the two.

Here's how to help Miss T. Ray during your first months together:

This step is crucial in helping Miss T. Ray acclimate to her new home. Confine Miss T. Ray to one cat-proof room in your house. Provide Miss T. Ray 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 Miss T. Ray 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 Touch Tool, treats or toys. 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 Miss T. Ray is worried about, allow her to hang back or hide if she chooses to do so.

Continue to provide a safe space. Even when Miss T. Ray 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 Miss T. Ray time to adjust to your house, routine, and lifestyle before introducing her to new people. When you have visitors over, give Miss T. Ray the freedom to make the decision to interact (or not!). Ask new people to ignore her – or if Miss T. Ray 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 Miss T. Ray 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 Miss T. Ray 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. Miss T. Ray 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 Miss T. Ray 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 Behavior Modification Manager.

Please keep in touch so we can continue to help you and Miss T. Ray 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!