



Dot 308153: What to Expect

Dot is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Dot is an active, playful and social boy looking for a home that can keep up with his energy level and provide consistency and routine in his new home.

From the ages of 2-8 weeks of age, Dot was unfortunately trained to use a bathtub and sink as a litterbox. This is a behavior that is not conducive to helping him be successful in an adopter's home. Because of this learned behavior, Dot was placed in our Behavior Modification Program where we worked on correcting this behavior.

Dot settled into the BMOD program very quickly. Dot was housed in a large kennel in BMOD, one that has multiple climbing structures and windows to look out of. Our plan was to limit access to any bathtubs or sinks (which was easy to do in a shelter environment) and reinforce anytime he used the litterbox with praise and reward. We slowly expanded his world in BMOD and allowed him to come out of his kennel to a larger space where there is a sink. In the beginning, he had a few instances of litterbox misuse where he defecated outside of the litterbox. These instances stopped after 2 weeks and for over a month now, Dot has not had any litterbox misuse. While in BMOD, we conditioned him to understand that using a litterbox was the appropriate thing to do. We are hopeful that while in his new home, with consistency and routine, this good behavior will continue.

Dot's new family should expect to continue working with him on this in his new home. To be successful, he should not be set up in a bathroom while acclimating to his new home. By limiting access to a bathtub or sink in the beginning, this will allow continued reinforcement that the litterbox is the appropriate place to go.

Dot is an extremely active and high energy boy who loves all kinds of toys. Dot does have his moments where he is calm and likes to snuggle, but when he is ready to play, watch out! He has a ton of energy and will need lots of enrichment and resources to keep him entertained. Dot has met several other kitties here and while he enjoys their company, he does play rough with them. If your resident cat does not like to rough and tumble play or wrestle, then Dot is probably not the best match for you.

Here's how to help Dot during your first month together:

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

Enrich his space. Dot loves toys, scratching posts, and perches with a window view. Giving him 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 Dot settle into your home. Give him time to get to know you before introducing him to new people.

Schedule interactive play sessions with him every day. Dot 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 Dot'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 his carrier out all the time, so it's just a part of his normal environment. Add a bed and keep the door securely propped open so he can go in and out on his own, making sure the door won't swing shut and frighten him. You can also clicker train him to run into the carrier on cue. Helping Dot get comfortable with his carrier will make it easier when it's time to visit the vet.

We're here to help!

We want Dot to be successful in his 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 Behavior Modification Manager.

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