



## Ari 277468: What to Expect

**Ari is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home.** Ari is a quiet, shy girl who enjoys being sweet talked, gentle petting and being brushed. Ari needs a quiet home with a patient, calm person. She would not do well in a home with a lot of hustle and bustle or one with children. Ari needs time to build a relationship and trust people. Her new family must be knowledgeable with feline body language and prepared to give her time to acclimate to her new home.

Ari was transferred to OHS from a shelter in Texas and then quickly adopted into a new home where she lived for about a month. During this time, Ari displayed fearful/shy behavior to the family and would find comfort in hiding spaces. She feared being handled, and would display this behavior by hissing, but would allow cheek/chin scratches. After a month in her new home, she was brought back to OHS as the adopter felt their home was not the best fit for Ari.

Upon return to OHS she was placed in the Behavior Modification program to allow us time to work with and learn more about her likes/dislikes. One thing we learned very quickly is Ari loves to be sweet talked to in a gentle calm voice. Calm, soothing voices have allowed us to build trust with her and she enjoys being pet on the cheeks, chin, and head. She'll lean into pets and knead when she is happy and comfortable. She also likes to be brushed and will do elevator butt when being brushed down her back. Ari continues to be fearful if she is startled or hears a loud noise. She displays this behavior by hissing or moving away, but has never swatted, lunged, or bitten. She would prefer to vocalize her concern rather than act out on it. Ari has not shown an interest in other cats so we are unsure if she would do well living with another cat. Ari does not have a history living with dogs, but we suspect exuberant or boisterous dogs would scare her.

Ari may hide, hiss, growl, etc. if you try to pet or handle her before she is comfortable. You'll need to develop a relationship with her before attempting to pet her or trying to pick her up. She has not shown much interest in playing with toys or eating treats, but we have found the best way to build a relationship with her is by gently talking to her. She loves to be told how pretty she is. 😊

### **Here's how to help Ari during your first months together:**

**Confine Ari to one cat-proof room in your house.** Provide Ari 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, in 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.

**Be prepared for this next part to take several weeks or even months.** Spend time with Ari 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 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 Ari is worried about, allow her to hang back or hide if she chooses to do so.

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

her – or if Ari seems curious or interested, have the new person speak to her softly, 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 Ari 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 Ari 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. Ari 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 Ari 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 Ari 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!