



Liam 278773: What to Expect

Liam is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Liam is a sweet, playful boy once he gets to know a person, but he will be scared at first. Liam needs a quiet home with a patient, calm person. He would not do well in a home with a lot of hustle and bustle or one with children.

Liam was brought to OHS due to the family's living situation changing. In his previous home he was described as being incredibly sweet and affectionate. A quiet and introverted boy, who enjoys curling up near you to sleep peacefully while you work, read, watch TV, etc. He prefers to cuddle on his terms and does not love to be picked up. Liam did live with another cat that would bully him at times, and because of this Liam would often hide. Because of this experience, we do not know if he would enjoy living with another cat or not. Liam does not have a history living with dogs, but we suspect exuberant or boisterous dogs would scare him.

Liam may hide, hiss, growl, swat or even bite if you try to pet or handle him before he is comfortable. You'll need to develop a relationship with him before attempting to pet him or trying to pick him up. The best way to engage with him is by offering kitty go-gurts (his favorite!) or engaging with him by waving a wand toy through the air. Liam loves to mimic natural hunting behavior by chasing wand toys, batting at them and pouncing. These activities will be a great way to build a relationship with him.

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

Confine Liam to one cat-proof room in your house. Provide Liam 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We're here to help!

We want Liam 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 Services Manager.

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