



Tinsel 346507: What to Expect

Tinsel is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Tinsel is a sweet, active, chatty lady who enjoys spending time with her human companions, as well as exploring her surroundings, window watching, and playing with toys. She would do best in a home with a patient person who can provide a consistent routine along with daily, interactive play sessions. Tinsel will need a home that can provide her with ample attention and one that can provide her with both physical and mental enrichment.

Tinsel was transferred to OHS from another shelter that wasn't able to provide the environment nor the mental and physical enrichment she needed to thrive. When Tinsel first arrived at her previous shelter, her high energy and active personality proved to be too much for the small kennel she was housed in. The limited space caused her significant stress, which presented in behaviors like growling, hissing, darting, and a tendency to become easily overstimulated. The decision was made to bring her to OHS and into our Behavior Modification Program. This program offers an environment better suited to helping cats feel at ease in a shelter setting. With a larger kennel, access to windows, a quieter atmosphere, and more one-on-one time with staff, we were able to begin to get a better understanding of her needs and personality.

Tinsel acclimated very quickly to the BMOD program. From day one, she was social with people, eagerly played with toys, and enjoyed lounging on her cat tower while watching birds and small critters outside the window. We quickly discovered that she loves wand toys—when we waved a feather wand through the air, she would happily leap up and pounce with great enthusiasm. We also recognized that she is an intelligent kitty who enjoys the challenge of treat puzzles and interactive toys. Additionally, we found that she adores exploring crinkly tunnels, enthusiastically using her scratching post, chasing crunchy treats tossed for her across the floor, and curling up for naps in cozy beds.

Tinsel is always the first kitty to greet us every morning in her expressive kitty dialect, showcasing her sparkling personality, and she never misses the chance to wish us goodnight at the end of each day. Tinsel is at her happiest when she is with her human companions, frequently seeking attention and interaction from staff. She can become anxious or stressed when left alone, and this may lead to signs of distress such as pacing and increased vocalization. She can also become overstimulated, particularly in new environments, and may need time to adjust and feel comfortable. Although Tinsel has not shown signs of overstimulation since arriving in the BMOD program, she did display this behavior in her previous shelter and while adjusting to new environments. Her overstimulation is typically linked to feelings of anxiety or stress. When overwhelmed, she may scratch or bite—especially if she is petted for too long. It is important to read her body language and recognize when she's had enough. Signs that she is becoming overstimulated include tail twitching, dilated pupils, fur standing on end, and rapid, frequent head butting or kneading. When you notice these cues, it's important to stop petting her and either give her space to walk away or calmly remove yourself from the area.

Tinsel would thrive in a home with someone who understands feline body language and can recognize and appropriately respond to her emotional needs. While in the BMOD program, Tinsel has interacted with several other cats. Although she can coexist with them, she may hiss and become agitated at times, indicating that she would be happiest as the only pet in her future home. Tinsel is an affectionate, intelligent kitty who will thrive in a home that can provide both physical and mental enrichment. While she enjoys her downtime lounging and relaxing, she also makes plenty of time for play and socializing throughout the day. She would do best in a calm environment that offers a variety of toys, sturdy scratching posts for climbing, and plenty of window access for bird watching to keep her engaged and happy. If you're looking for a sweet, social, chatty, and playful companion, Tinsel is the gal for you!

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

Confine Tinsel to one cat-proof room in your house. Provide Tinsel 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.). Instead, provide her with a safe, comfortable hiding spot, such as her cat carrier, a covered hidey-bed, or a large dog crate draped with a blanket.

Once she is using the litter box, eating regularly, and coming out of hiding to play with toys, you can start introducing her to the rest of your home.

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

Schedule interactive play sessions with her every day. Tinsel 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 Tinsel's attention. Or simulate mouse activity by sliding the end of the toy around on the floor in quick, jerky movements. Allow her to pounce and catch the toy and bat it around. Then start again. End your play session by allowing her to capture the toy.

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

We're here to help!

We want Tinsel 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 Behavior Modification Manager.

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