



## Calamondin 351819: What to Expect

**Calamondin is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home.** Calamondin is a sweet and playful boy who is ready to find his forever home. He may be timid at first, but once he feels safe he enjoys being pet and being close by people. Calamondin may never be a social butterfly with everyone he meets, but he will bond with someone when given the time he needs to get to know you.

Calamondin was found as a stray by a Good Samaritan. When Calamondin arrived at OHS he displayed fearful, shy behavior that would present itself as hiding, cowering, and hissing when the staff attempted to engage with him. After 10 days with no change in his behavior the decision was made to enroll him in the Behavior Modification Program. This program offers an environment better suited to helping cats feel at ease in a shelter setting. With the larger kennel space, access to windows, increased enrichment, and one on one time with the team we set out to learn more about him.

Calamondin was understandably nervous during his first few days in BMOD, spending most of his time tucked away in his bed, quietly watching us with wide, cautious eyes. If we got too close, he would hiss and retreat, letting us know he was feeling scared. We respected his boundaries, spoke to him softly, and offered him treats to help create positive associations with people. Before long, he began to relax and feel more comfortable in our presence.

It didn't take us long to discover that Calamondin loves both toys and treats. As we swished a wand toy through the air, he eagerly chased and pounced after it with great enthusiasm. Using his favorite things—playtime and tasty rewards—helped him learn that people bring good experiences. As his confidence grew, he began accepting gentle pets, leaning into our hands and purring contentedly.

Calamondin also became interested in the other cats in the BMOD program, and this marked another big step in his journey. Watching the other cats helped build his confidence, and before long he was happily playing alongside them, following them around, and rubbing against them affectionately. Seeing him blossom from a timid, fearful cat into one who actively sought out both human affection and feline companionship has been incredibly rewarding.

Calamondin has blossomed into the playful, sweet, and happy boy we always knew he could be. While he can still be startled by sudden movements or unfamiliar situations and may briefly run to hide, he recovers quickly with gentle reassurance and kind words. He has made tremendous progress during his time in the BMOD program, and we're confident he will continue to flourish in the right home.

Calamondin really thrives in the company of other cats. Having a feline friend helps him feel safe, secure, and confident. He can often be found playing, cuddling, or simply spending time with his kitty companions. Because of this, Calamondin will thrive in a calm, patient home where his family will give him the time he needs to settle in at his own pace and with a friendly resident cat to be his friend.

His new family should expect that he will hide for a few weeks, possibly longer. You'll need to introduce him to new things slowly. Calamondin typically flees and hides when overwhelmed or scared. It's important to provide him with a small room with appropriate hiding spots for him to relax in, such as his 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 him. The room you set him up in will be the catalyst for how quickly he acclimates. Start thinking now which room in your home would be best for Calamondin to settle into. If it's a bedroom, can he get under the bed or dresser making it difficult to spend time with him? 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 him? 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 his hiding spot, use calm voices and offer tasty treats to show you are not a threat. Place a small amount of wet food or a treat on a spoon and offer it to Calamondin while in his hidey spot. Over time, by continuing to do this, Calamondin will become more comfortable and recognize that yummy food = people, therefore creating a positive association between the two.

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

**This step is crucial in helping Calamondin acclimate to his new home. Confine Calamondin to one cat-proof room in your house.** Provide Calamondin 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 Calamondin 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 a toy or treats. 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 Calamondin is worried about, allow him to hang back or hide if he chooses to do so.

**Continue to provide a safe space.** Even when Calamondin 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 Calamondin time to adjust to your house, routine, and lifestyle before introducing him to new people. When you have visitors over, give Calamondin the freedom to make the decision to interact (or not!). Ask new people to ignore him – or if Calamondin seems curious or interested, have the new person toss his 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 his to run into the carrier on cue. Helping Calamondin 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 Calamondin 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. Calamondin 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 him come out of his shell will be extremely rewarding. Celebrate those small victories.

### **We're here to help!**

We want Calamondin 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 the BMOD Cat trainers at [bmodcat@oregonhumane.org](mailto:bmodcat@oregonhumane.org) to connect with the Feline Behavior Modification department.

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