



## Paprika 351554 : What to Expect

**Paprika is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home.** Paprika is a sweet and affectionate tortie lady with a playful and curious nature. Paprika may need a little time to adjust to new environments, but once she feels safe and secure, she blossoms into a loving and affectionate companion. Once she feels comfortable, Paprika enjoys spending time with her human companions, exploring her surroundings, watching wildlife from the window, savoring tasty treats, and playing with her favorite toys.

Paprika was transferred to OHS from another shelter that was unable to provide the environment she needed to thrive. When she first arrived at her previous shelter, the busy, noisy shelter environment and confined kennel space contributed to significant stress and anxiety. The presence of other cats—their sights, sounds, and scents—was particularly overwhelming for her. She often rubbed against the kennel bars, paced back and forth, and rolled onto her back to expose her belly when staff approached. While she generally sought attention, prolonged petting, sudden movements, or the sight of another cat during interactions with staff could become overwhelming, causing her frustration to escalate. When this happened, she would occasionally swat with her claws. Because her behavior appeared to stem from frustration with being surrounded by other cats and the limitations of her environment, the decision was made to transfer her to OHS and place her in 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.

Paprika acclimated very quickly to the BMOD program. We saw immediately that being in a quiet, calm environment and having choice and control made her feel safe. 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 the wand toy through the air, we watched her expertly stalk it before catapulting spectacularly high and impressing us with her acrobatic skills. Paprika is happiest when she's spending time with her human companions and regularly seeks out attention and interaction from staff. She often asks for affection by running over to us, rubbing against our legs, chirping up at us, and crawling into our laps.

Paprika would thrive in a home with an adopter who understands feline body language and can recognize and respond appropriately to her emotional needs. During her time in the BMOD program, Paprika has consistently demonstrated that she finds the presence of other cats stressful. She will vocalize, growl, and hiss at cats that approach her kennel, indicating that she will be happiest as the only kitty in her future home where she can enjoy all the attention to herself. Paprika is an affectionate kitty who will thrive in a home that can provide ample time to play with her and give her attention. 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, predictable environment that offers a variety of toys, sturdy scratching posts and climbing opportunities, and plenty of window access for bird watching to keep her engaged and happy. With the right balance of enrichment, affection, and respect for her boundaries, Paprika has all the makings of a wonderful companion. If you're looking for a sweet, social, beautiful, and playful companion, Paprika is the gal for you!

### **Here's how to help Paprika during your first month together:**

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

Spend time with Paprika 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 a toy or treats. 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 Paprika is worried about, allow her to hang back or hide if she chooses to do so.

**Continue to provide a safe space.** Even when Paprika 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.

Enrich her space. Paprika 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 Paprika settle into your home. Give her time to get to know you before introducing her to 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 Paprika get comfortable with her carrier will make it easier when it's time to visit the vet.

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

We want Paprika to be successful in her new home. We are 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 support you and Paprika 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!