



Seaside 351024: What to Expect

Seaside is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Seaside is a sweet and sensitive boy who is ready to find his forever home. Seaside may be a little timid at first, but once he feels safe and secure, his charming, playful personality shines through. He loves spending time with his feline friends, enjoying tasty treats, zooming around the room, perching up high on his cat tower, and having fun with his favorite toys. While Seaside may never be a social butterfly with everyone he meets, with patience and time to build trust, he'll form a deep bond with his special person and blossom into an affectionate, fun-loving, and energetic companion.

Seaside came to OHS from the home of an overwhelmed cat caregiver who was unable to provide proper care for him. When Seaside arrived at OHS he displayed fearful, shy behaviors that presented as hiding, darting, and hissing when the staff attempted to engage with him. Due to the level of stress he was displaying and the impact it had on his ability to comfortably interact with staff, he was enrolled in our Behavior Modification Program. The environment in the BMOD program is better suited at helping cats feel comfortable in a shelter environment. With the larger kennel space, access to windows, increased enrichment, and dedicated one-on-one time with our team, we were able to help him decompress and learn more about his personality.

Seaside was worried and overwhelmed during his first few days in BMOD. He spent most of his time perched on his cat tower, quietly observing us with wide, cautious eyes. If anyone approached too closely, he would dart away, telling us that he was frightened and needed space. We respected his boundaries, spoke to him softly, and offered treats to help him build positive associations with people.

It didn't take long for us to discover one of Seaside's favorite things—toys! The moment we brought out a wand toy, his playful side came to life. He transforms into an agile little hunter, expertly stalking his "prey" before launching into the air with impressive, acrobatic leaps. He also loves tackling egg cartons, bounding after rolling balls, zooming through crinkly tunnels, and proudly carrying little toy springs and mice around in his mouth. By pairing our presence with two of Seaside's favorite things—playtime and treats—he gradually learned that people bring good things. This helped him build confidence, trust, and positive associations with his human friends. Today, he eagerly sits at the front of his kennel, rubbing flirtatiously against the bars and meowing to let us know he's ready for his next play session.

As Seaside's confidence grew, so did his trust in people. With time, he became increasingly comfortable with gentle affection and now leans into cheek, chin, and full-body pets once he feels safe, often headbutting for more attention, making biscuits, and purring with contentment. His future family should be prepared to give him the time and patience he needs to continue building trust. They should also be willing to continue working with him on becoming more comfortable with touch, using gentle, positive interactions and respecting his boundaries as his confidence grows.

We quickly noticed that Seaside was intrigued by the other kitties in the program, watching them play with cautious curiosity. As his confidence grew, we introduced him to several feline friends and discovered just how much he enjoys the company of other cats! Seaside has an exuberant, rough-and-tumble play style and loves energetic wrestling matches, chasing games, and playful pouncing. Having feline friends around also seemed to give him an extra sense of security, helping him feel more confident and encouraging him to come out of his shell.

Seaside would thrive in a home with another confident, playful cat who is comfortable with his energetic and boisterous personality. A feline companion who can appropriately communicate boundaries and let Seaside know when they've had enough would be a wonderful match, helping him continue to build positive social skills while enjoying the companionship he clearly loves.

Seaside 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. If you are looking for an adorable, playful, and silly companion then Seaside is the kitty for you!

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. Seaside 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 Seaside 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 Seaside while in his hidey spot. Over time, by continuing to do this, Seaside will become more comfortable and recognize that yummy food = people, therefore creating a positive association between the two.

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

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

Continue to provide a safe space. Even when Seaside 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 Seaside time to adjust to your house, routine, and lifestyle before introducing him to new people. When you have visitors over, give Seaside the freedom to make the decision to interact (or not!). Ask new people to ignore him – or if Seaside 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 Seaside 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 Seaside 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. Seaside 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 Seaside 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 to connect with the Feline Behavior Modification department.

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