Minnie 248205*:* What to Expect

**Minnie is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home**. Minnie is a sweet, playful girl once she gets to know a person, but she will be scared at first. She needs a quiet home with a patient, calm person. She would not do well in a home with a lot of hustle and bustle or one with children. It will take some time and patience for her to come out of her shell and feel comfortable soliciting attention but once she feels confident in her space, she will come to you for pets and play. Minnie may hide, hiss, swat or even bite if you try to pet or handle her before she is comfortable. You’ll need to develop a relationship with her before attempting to pet her or trying to pick her up. Use treats and play time with interactive toys (like feather toys) to help build trust.

Minniemay also scratch or bite when she becomes overstimulated – like if you pet her for too long. She does like attention – but on her own terms. It is very important to pay attention to her body language and **know to stop petting** her when she displays warning signals that she’s done with pets. Minnie’stail will twitch, her pupils will dilate, she will head butt and knead very quickly and frequently. When she starts doing these things, you will need to stop petting her and either allow her to walk away or leave the room yourself.

Minnie previously lived in a multi cat home and really seems to enjoy their company. She will need to go to a home with another confident cat companion who can help her come out of her shell and improve her confidence. Once she settles in, you’ll see that she loves treats and toys and enjoys pets. She loves to carry around her toy ball in her mouth and toss it around the room!

**Here’s how to help Minnie during your first month together:**

**Confine Minnie to one cat-proof room in your house.** Provide Minnie 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.). Minnie may climb to try to get to a high spot or squeeze into a small space to hide. Provide her with a safe, comfortable hiding place instead like her cat carrier, a hidey-bed, or a large dog crate covered with a blanket. To help her adjust, we will send you home with a crate and blanket she has been using at OHS.

**Spend time with Minnie in her room.** Don’t force her out of her hiding spot. Instead, encourage her to come out on her own using wet food, treats or toys. Once she is using the litter box, eating regularly, and coming out of hiding when you are in the room, 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 Minnie is worried about, allow her to hang back or hide if she chooses to do so.

**Enrich her space.** Minnie 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 inappropriate behaviors. She also likes watching birds on TV or out the window.

**Schedule interactive play sessions with her every day.** Minnie 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 Minnie’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.

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

**We’re here to help!**

We want Minnie to be successful in your home. Please keep in touch so we can continue to help you now and in the future. Please reach out if you have any questions or just to give an update. We love to see photos and hear how our friends are doing! Call our Pet Behavior Helpline at (503)416-2983 or email bmod@oregonhumane.org.

Thank you for adopting from the Oregon Humane Society. Congratulations on your new cat!