



Rhyun: What to Expect

Rhyun is a graduate of the Behavior Modification Program and needs a special home. Rhyun is a sweet, playful cat once he gets to know a person, but he will be scared at first. Rhyun needs a quiet home with a patient, calm person. He would not do well in a home with a lot of hustle and bustle or one with children.

Rhyun arrived at OHS as a stray. A good Samaritan brought him to Dove Lewis during the [2020 Clackamas County wildfire evacuations](#) and he was later transferred to OHS. In the shelter, he has co-existed with other calm, adult cats, but does not appreciate overly playful, adolescent cats and will hiss and swat at them. If you have other cats in the home, a proper, slow introduction will be key to success. We do not think he would do well in a home with dogs.

Rhyun may dart, hiss, or scratch if he is scared. When you first bring him home, if you try to pick him up or pet him before he's ready, he may hiss, swat or growl. You'll need to develop a relationship with him first. Use treats and play time with interactive toys to help build trust.

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

Confine Rhyun to one cat-proof room in your house. Provide Rhyun 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.) and **make sure all windows/doors leading outside are securely closed.** Provide him with a safe, comfortable hiding place like his cat carrier, a hidey-bed, or a large dog crate covered with a blanket. To help him adjust, we will send you home with the crate and bed he has been using at OHS.

Spend time with Rhyun in his room. Don't pull him out of his hiding spot. Instead, encourage him to come out on his own using toys and treats (he loves wet food!). 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 Rhyun is worried about, allow him to hang back or hide if he chooses to do so.

Continue to provide a safe space. Even when Rhyun has started exploring the rest of the house, give him a safe space that he can retreat to. When he is in his safe spot, 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 Rhyun time to adjust to your house, routine, and lifestyle before introducing him to new people. When you have visitors over, give Rhyun the freedom to make the decision to interact (or not!). Ask new people to ignore him – or if Rhyun seems curious, have the new person offer a favorite toy or treat. 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 the normal environment. Add a bed and keep the door securely propped open so he can go in and out on his own. You can also clicker train him to run into the carrier on cue. Helping Rhyun stay comfortable in his carrier will make it easier when it's time to visit the vet.

Schedule interactive play sessions every day. Rhyun will appreciate 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. Simulate mouse activity by sliding the end of the toy around on the floor in quick, jerky movements. Try using the "Cat Dancer" – a simple cardboard and wire toy –

to mimic moths buzzing around and briefly landing. Allow him to pounce and catch the toy and bat it around. Then start again. End your play session by allowing him to capture the toy.

Continue training! Rhyun is smart and enjoys reward-based training. At OHS, he's been practicing "Touch" by booping a target stick with his nose. Once he starts to interact with you, you can use reward-based training to teach him new things. Down the road, this will be helpful when it's time to go to the vet or introduce him to a new person. To learn more about training a cat, check out our [Introduction to Clicker Training video](#) or our [Virtual Tricks Class for Cats](#).

Visiting the vet: Unless it's an emergency, give Rhyun 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. Rhyun is a cat that needs an understanding owner who will 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 Rhyun to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. Call the Behavior Helpline at (503)416-2983 or email Deborah at deborahf@oregonhumane.org.

Please keep in touch so we can continue to help you and Rhyun now and in the future. 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!