



# Bashful Buddies

**Thank you for considering a Bashful Buddy!**

They're the scaredy-cats! The under-the-bed cats. The ones that take time to bond. They need patience, time, and understanding. And when they start to trust you, and blossom, it's the most rewarding relationship!

## Meeting a Bashful Buddy

- Peek-a-boo! In the shelter, Bashful Buddies are often burrowed in the safety of their blanket. It's not uncommon for them to choose to hide under blankets, beds, or in a tent within their cage. Don't expect a BB to come out of their cage or even come forward to greet you. If you're lucky, they may lean into your hand when you pet them. The shelter is a scary place that masks their true personality.
- Zooming! Some Bashful Buddies are in foster homes. These lucky kitties have had time to adjust to a home, and the foster parent will have lots of valuable information to share! Zoom meetings allow you to see the personality of the cat in a home where they are comfortable and a sneak peak of what they will be like once they adjust to your home. In-person meetings at the shelter are available; however, understand the cat will be scared and unlikely to interact with you.

## Acclimating at Home

- Start your BB off with their own small, quiet space like a spare bedroom or bathroom. Ideally, the room should have some natural light to allow natural kitty behaviors while acclimating. Make sure they have access to water and a litter box at all times. Scatter enticing toys around the room and use a Feliway Calming Diffuser to help minimize stress.
- Allow your Bashful Buddy to hide! Hiding helps them feel safe and decreases stress. Block off hiding spots inaccessible to you (under the bed, or high shelves). Instead, provide them with hiding spaces that allow easy monitoring, such as a cardboard box with a blanket in it, their carrier, or cubbies made for cats. Let them come out of their hiding space on their own time. Forcing a Bashful Buddy out of their hiding space will decrease trust.
- To affectionately communicate with your cat, use the slow-blink technique, indicating that you are a friend and not a threat. If your Bashful Buddy slow-blinks back at you, they are starting to accept you as a friend! This is a great sign!

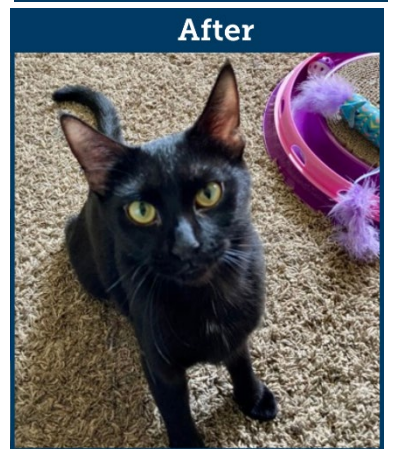
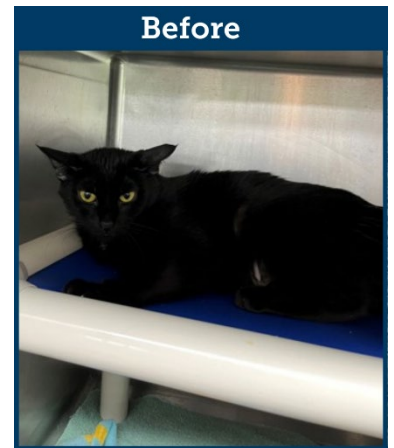




- Offer canned food several times a day. Remain in the room and talk softly to them while they eat to help create a bond and accelerate their trust in you. Another option is to use treat tubes such as Churus or Squeeze Ups. Many cats find these irresistible and may be familiar with them from the shelter!
  - Medication – your cat may be on medication to help manage their stress. This is often a temporary tool used to help with the transition. We'll provide you with meds to get you started and give you all the information you need.
  - Invite your new cat to play. You may be surprised how fast a shy kitty will spring to play! Wand toys are great for this, as it allows interactive play at a distance. Let playtime be playtime - do not try to pet them (yet). This is a great way to bond.
- Graduating to the home! When your cat is comfortable and confident in their safe room and showing interest in exploring outside of the room, they may be ready to explore more of the house. Leave the door to their safe room open so they can return whenever they like. Create dens around your house, especially in the main living areas so they can have options and enjoy the same spaces with you.

### Tips for Success

- Patience! We know how much you want to pet your new cat, but do not reach for them every time they approach. Taking it slow in the beginning speeds up relationship building; you'll be petting them before you know it! In the early days, try sitting in the room and ignoring them, or talking to them softly without making eye contact. It's a great time to catch up on your new book or a TV show you've been meaning to watch (keep the volume low or wear headphones).
- When you do pet them, don't reach into their space or corner them. Instead, offer a finger or hand towards their cheek, ear, or chin and see if they welcome the petting. If they pull away from you, they are saying "no thank you". Use the 3 second rule – pet for no more than 3 seconds and wait for the cat to indicate they'd like more.
- Many Bashful Buddies benefit from having a cat friend. A confident cat can be a great teacher, showing them how wonderful it is to have a relationship with you!
- Don't take it personally if your first attempts get you nowhere! Give it time. Cats are sensitive souls, and they need time to decompress. You will enjoy the moments of interaction so much more if they come to you.



**Earning the trust of a Bashful Buddy can be a slow process,  
but it's worth it in the end!**