



Is a Shy Cat for Me and My Family?

We'll come right out and say it. A shy cat is not for everyone so please, don't feel bad if you cannot adopt a shy cat. Shy cats have special needs and not all households are suitable. Please review this checklist to see if your family and home are suitable for a shy cat.

- ✓ Can you **and your children** accept a cat on its own terms?
- ✓ Can you put the needs of a cat above your own needs?
- ✓ Can you accept a cat that may not behave like other pet cats you've known?
- ✓ Will you be happy with a cat that may not snuggle with you? It helps to already have a cuddly cat that satisfies your need for an affectionate cat.
- ✓ Are you persistent and patient?
- ✓ Will you work with a shy cat for months waiting to see a change in their behavior?
- ✓ Is someone home a good part of the day or evening and willing to spend time with this type of cat?
- ✓ Is your home relatively calm and quiet?
- ✓ Will you and your family remember to keep the doors and windows closed to ensure your shy cat won't stray?
- ✓ Would your current cat like a cat companion who will not be dominant or assertive?

Making Your Shy Cat Feel at Home

It may take a very long time, but if you are patient and kind, shy cats can turn into great pets. They may blossom in your home over time, but such a change would probably be slow as cats don't change quickly. If you are patient, loving and respectful of these cats' needs, you may be rewarded with a more confident cat who may eventually ask for more of your attention. Even if they stay aloof, you will know that you are providing a safe, healthy and loving home to a beautiful creature who deserves a good life.

- ✓ Ask for help. Many have tread this road before. MWHS can be a resource to get you in touch with others who love their shy cats.
- ✓ Shy cats and small rooms are made for each other. Start small and slowly introduce them to large rooms. Slowly...
- ✓ Shy cats need a place to hide and spy on the world around them. Covered baskets are great.
- ✓ Spend lots of quality time with your shy cat. Move slowly, speak quietly. Make eye contact but avoid staring. Blinking is good. So is yawning.
- ✓ Stick to a routine. Become predictable.
- ✓ Help your shy cat become familiar with you. Read aloud. Play the radio at a low volume. Hang out on the floor near your cat.
- ✓ Offer treats, at first, using a long handled spoon.
- ✓ When it feels right, try a toy wand or stick with fleece on the end.
- ✓ If (s)he'll let you, try to gently touch your cat's cheek.
- ✓ Go slowly. Each day builds on the previous day's progress. The routine is slow going but cannot be rushed.

