

Riley

Currently Eating

Dry Food: Purina Kitten Chow

Canned Food: Fancy Feast or Friskies pate

For active video links and better quality photos, **visit www.pet-helpers.com/riley.pdf**

Once Riley trusts, he's a wonderful, affectionate companion.

He'll make you happy and you'll know you're loved.

In a Nutshell

Riley is a handsome, loving and playful kitten with an endearing walk. He's progressed from a spitting, swatting frightened kitten to the first one to come and greet me when I walk in. He comes right over to me with his tail straight up in the air and leans against my leg, purring his greeting.



How we got from there to here...

Riley came to stay with me along with two of his three litter mates on September 4. When I first met him in the cat carrier he hissed (they all did) and spit and jumped at me. He was so scared and not in the least interested in being handled. In fact, when I brought him home and transferred him from the carrier to the cage, he bit my thumb and drew blood. I knew I'd have to work on making friends with Riley before the others.

Riley

Once in the cage with the siblings and food, water and litter box, he started to get better. He'd still spit and swat at me, but I was able to reach in and grab the scruff of his neck from behind him so I could pull him out and hold him. I made sure to pick him up and hold him (and the others) every few hours during the day. It took some time, but he got used to it, and that coupled with little bits of canned food treats a few times a day, he started to relax. I introduced them to the cat dancer toy after a few days and that also helped the progress. After Riley stopped spitting at me, I started giving him (them) one quarter of a 3 oz can of food once in the morning and again in the evening. Eventually the hissing stopped as well and he started coming out of the cage on his own and coming to me rather than me needing to pull him out to hold him.

When I could tell he was enthusiastic about and responsive to the cat dancer toy, I let them all out of the cage to play in the room. They would run around and chase each other, play with toys and then I'd be able to entice them back into the cage with the cat dancer toy. See a video of them at play time on their first day out of the cage:

<https://youtu.be/HYQ3CkscuXw>

After the spitting and swatting stopped, he would still cower away when I'd reach out to pet him or pick him up, but would purr once he realized I was petting him or he was in my lap being cuddled. After a time, he learned to see me as the one who fed him and cleaned his litter boxes and gave him love. He then became very attached, purring easily when I'd pet him and arching his back with his tail sticking straight up in the air.



Riley

After a couple of weeks, when I'd go in to play with them, Riley would come over to me and climb onto my lap for a cuddle. He liked to sleep on top of the cage, either on a towel or in one of the cat beds, but would get up and come over to my lap, climb on and settle down for cuddles.

Riley was very young when he first arrived and didn't seem to understand the litter box concept immediately. After I put him into the box a few times when he would start to pee next to it, he learned. However, he is pretty fastidious about the litter box, so I've kept it very clean in order to prevent any incidents outside the box. I'm home all day and check and scoop as needed every few hours during the day. Overnight hours can be a challenge, so I've also added boxes as they've grown. They have 5 litter boxes for the 4 kittens, and we have no "accidents" intentional or otherwise.

About a month after they'd been here, they started to show signs of wanting to explore beyond the door to their room (guest bedroom bathroom). I opened it up for them so they could have the run of both spaces. They loved it. Riley was a little scared at first and would hide beneath the bed when I'd go in to feed/clean/visit. He would always come out to play with cat dancer or to get in my lap for cuddles when I'd sit down on the floor. After another week or so when I'd move the cat dancer up onto the bed and they seemed to feel it was a safe space, we were able to move up onto the bed for cuddle time. I find that waiting for them to express interest or desire is a good guide for minimizing stress.



Riley

Riley's very food motivated, and he's always the first one to come when I'm adding dry food or dishing up canned food. He eats Purina Kitten Chow very well, and I originally fed him Friskies pate style canned food. He seemed to like it, but the others didn't so I switched to Fancy Feast. He likes Salmon & Shrimp and Seafood Feast a lot, but also eats Chopped Grill dinner.

He loves playing with his siblings, wrestling or chasing each other, but he can also be a loner at times. He loves balls and furry mouse toys. Frankly, he'll sit and chew on or toss around any type of mouse toy. As I've mentioned, the cat dancer toy is always fun, but recently he's been introduced to two new toys he really loves too. One is "Da Bird" which is a long pole with a string and a feathered "bird" at the end. He's a marvelous jumper and can catch that bird right out of the air. The other toy he loves lately is a laser cat toy. He does that little kitty clicking thing they do when they're watching a bird and it's so adorable. He also does that with the cat dancer and Da Bird.

He *is* a talker! Sometimes he sounds like a tiny lion. He'll be wandering around or looking out the window and chattering away. He also talks to me while I'm dishing up his food. He also often talks when he gets into the litter box. (I think this is because when he first arrived and would use the box while I was with them, I'd always say "Good boy Riley" to reinforce the positive behavior.) Sometimes, he'll also talk to me when I tell him I love him or say how cute he is.



Riley

Riley is very scared of being closed in a cat carrier. He hides his face and curls into a tight little package. Even though I tend to take the carrier into his room and let him play or nap inside (which he enjoys), when I finally shut the door with him inside, he becomes quite scared.

Over the past two months, I've brought visitors to meet them and play. At first, he was very reserved and would move under the bed. I always give new people or visitors a cat dancer toy to entice the kittens, and they come up to play and sniff the new person. Now when we have a visitor, Riley doesn't hide and will approach and play or sniff clothes and shoes. In his own room, he will even accept being petted by someone he's just met.

We've also been rehearsing being in a new environment this week (post Thanksgiving). I carry him and his siblings one at a time upstairs to my cat Theodore's room. When I carry Riley out of his room, he huddles in my arm, curling his tail under and hiding his face. This too is very scary for him. He will be scared in a new place and with new people at first, but he is food and play motivated, so using those activities to encourage his friendship will be very helpful. It's also helpful to sit on the floor at first at his level so he doesn't feel intimidated.

Riley is very affectionate and loves cuddles. He especially likes being rubbed on his chest, cheeks and chin. He has an unusual walk that makes it look like he's limping. He had an x-ray done and the veterinarian said *"Riley's xrays are close to normal. Growth plate might be a little irregular but nothing more apparent. Which is good. So I think we're ok just monitoring as long as limping receding overall."*



Riley

His Ideal New Home...

Riley is a very sweet and affectionate boy who will do well if he has a safe place to run around, jump, climb and be generally rambunctious during play. He likes to be near the household activity, so once trust is established, and he's become familiar with the household sounds and people, he'll probably want to have a chair or kitty castle and a cat bed strategically placed that he can call his own. He enjoys looking out the windows, and he loves stalking and catching his toys, so he may want to spend time outdoors after he gets accustomed to his new place. He needs someone who can keep his litter box cleaned and his food and water dishes filled and provide plenty of cuddles and lap time for loving.

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Videos with Riley:

Playing with sister Rose - <https://youtu.be/1zWqiQ8YiJM>

With brother Jasper - <https://youtu.be/Le9V1YpptPU>

First Cat Dancer play time - https://youtu.be/MoJm_WKwPcM

