

Foster Guide: Online Promotion

PAWS is counting on your help to list your foster for adoption! Please email both foster@phillypaws.org and petfinder@phillypaws.org with a written description of your foster animal along with some photos; we'll post what you send on PAWS' website as well as search sites like petfinder.com.

Please include the following information:

Name: [name]

Age: [age]

How I came to PAWS: [reason for animal's surrender]

Animal ID#: [ex. A12345678]

Most of our adopters use the internet to search for a pet, so **making a good web listing is one of the most important things you can do to find your foster a home.** You can see our current animal listings at phillypaws.org/adopt. Your foster might already have a bio, but it was likely written when the animal first came in, before we knew much about its personality. It will need new pictures, too, that reflect how happy and comfortable they are now that they're out of the shelter. **If your foster is already online from their time in the shelter, you must still send in an updated bio and photos.**

Here are some pointers to get started...

Bio writing tips

As the person who knows your foster pet best, **you have a special perspective.** You know what the pet is like in a home, their quirks and habits, and everything that makes them unique. Adopters often say they want to "know what they're getting," so they will really appreciate reading what you have to say and just might fall in love!

The bio doesn't have to be a work of art, just a **positive** and straightforward description of the pet in your own words. Just a paragraph or two is fine. You can build on what's already in your foster's online listing, or start a description from scratch.

To get started, here are some questions you can answer:

- How would you describe this pet to a friend?
- What are the most adorable things the pet does? ("the little things" that ***help adopters fall in love.***)
- What kind of environment would this pet be happiest in?
- Has the pet met other animals, and how did they react?
- What are the pet's habits around the house?
- Do they have special medical needs? If so, explain in plain language for people who may be unfamiliar with veterinary terminology, and describe how it may impact daily life.
- What do you love most about this pet?

Picture taking tips

Good, eye-catching photos are the most important part of a pet's listing. Please follow these guidelines:

- **Get down to the pet's level** to take a picture, instead of photographing from above.
- **Make sure there's plenty of light** so the picture comes out bright and clear. Let in as much natural lighting as possible by opening the shades and blinds.
- **Get up close and personal:** go near enough to the animal with the camera so the animal takes up most of the frame (it will result in a better picture than zooming in or cropping afterward).
- Photograph in a place where there is **no clutter in the background** - the less stuff in the picture, the better the animal will stand out.
- When photographing on your phone, **take lots of pictures in a row** by holding down the shutter button. Later, you can choose the best ones and delete the rest.
- Try to get the animal to make **eye contact** with the camera, or to look just above the camera. Hold a toy or treat above the camera to encourage them to look up. Use something that makes a sound, like a crumpling piece of paper or a squeaking/jingling toy.
- Take your time - animals may not "pose" for photos right away, but if you spend a few minutes waiting patiently with your camera ready, the right shot will eventually happen.
- If the animal isn't comfortable having a camera pointed at them, get them used to it by placing the camera/phone down next to them for a while, or holding it near them while you pet them or give treats.
- Please make sure photos are **clear and not blurry**.
- If you don't have a camera phone or don't feel you take good pictures, find a friend who does, or reach out to PAWS for help!

Here are a few kinds of photos you can take:

- Try for at least one clear, close-up picture to serve as its main headshot
- A photo of the pet being petted or held, if the pet enjoys it.
- Interacting with a human - being petted or scratched, curled up on a lap, rubbing their cheek against someone.
- Doing things that reflect its personality: a mellow dog resting peacefully, a playful cat swatting a toy, etc.

If you'd like more photo-taking guidance, here's a helpful video: <https://youtu.be/-SDI-A8RY5E>

Please email foster@phillypaws.org and petfinder@phillypaws.org with your bio and photos. Photos should be sent as individual images, not a collage. The listing can display up to four pictures, but if you have more than that, please feel free to send them! If you also have a video clip you'd like to include in your foster pet's listing, please let us know.