



# CFFR Report Card Best Practices

If you were fostering with us during COVID, you know that our cats and kittens were literally flying off the shelves the minute their profiles were posted by us on Petfinder! You may have gotten up to a dozen applications within a few days of posting.

In this new peri-post-pandemic age however, we have a lot more competition now that shelters are fully open, and it's imperative to be able to grab a potential adopter's attention.

So - how do we grab that attention? Great photos and cute compelling bios!

## **GETTING GREAT PHOTOS:**

### **Lighting:**

Even if you need to take a cat or kitten into a separate room to keep distractions to a minimum, find a place with good natural light - which in photography terms, is indirect light (not a kitten sitting in a sunbeam!). Plus getting a kitten away from its littermates for their photo shoot can be super helpful in containing potential photo pose pandemonium!

When you're trying to get a rambunctious kitten to "pose", using toys (and a helper if you have one) is key. We've found that dangling something that's clearly out of reach, but VERY interesting usually does the trick!

Using neutral or bright colored solid backgrounds helps too - some fosters purchase cheap bright or neutral throw blankets for this purpose.

### **Posing and cropping:**

Our most successful profiles have the kittens/cats looking UP at the camera (or at least looking at the camera) to show off their eyes and allow the adopter to imagine this sweet kitty gazing lovingly at THEM!



Cropping is super easy and very important! Crop out any extra background that isn't necessary. It's a very quick edit on your phone. Show off their coloring/markings/eyes. If you have portrait mode that's the best option, as when you get it focused it blurs the background and looks super professional! We can have up to 5 photos and 1 video, or 6 photos on PetFinder, but make sure to just send your best. We wish we had time to edit all the photos we get but sadly we don't, so please take a bit of time to make sure we have your very best submissions!

Include one photo that is cropped to highlight your kitty's full face that will be used as the thumbnail on all the places the profile appears. Eyes fully open, ears erect so they look healthy, engaged and happy!

Most phone cameras have "burst mode" where you can hold down the shutter button and take dozens of photos at the same time when the kittens are moving. Then you can go into edit mode and save the one/ones that are the best, and crop/edit from there.



You might be surprised to learn that we have some kittens who have been waiting for weeks to be adopted and others who are adopted within days of being posted and it seems the difference is in the photos (and bios - coming up next!)

## **WRITING GREAT BIOS**

While the photos are the very first impression, a close second is how your cat/kitten's personality is presented.

You'll see this placeholder text in the bio section of the report card -

*Please replace this placeholder text with a bio written in the "first person" in the following format: "Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a \_\_\_\_\_[week/month] old [male/female] [boy/girl] [cat/kitten], born on [birthdate]." Describe their personality from their point of view. How they play, vocalize, their favorite toys, how they interact in your home with you, your pets, children, their siblings, etc. Make sure to note any special physical characteristics - i.e. missing an eye, tail or leg - and also include a photo showing this. (Healed if applicable)*

so you know that we find we get the best results by having the cat/kitten "write" the bio in the first person.

Below are a few examples of bios. They certainly don't need to be this long but using different personality traits and adding some commentary that makes them stand out from the

crowd really does help. The first one got a kitten and her companion both adopted within days of being posted - even when her companion wasn't posted yet!

*Hi! My name is Crumble, and I'm as sweet as the pastry I'm named after! I'm a 11-week-old mini panther, born on 4/23/21.*

*In addition to being a sweet, sleek raven-haired girl (with two white spots on my chest, so you can see me in the dark), my foster mom says I'm the most amazing, zoomy hunter-player she's ever had the pleasure to host in her kitten room. I'm lightning fast chasing my toys, and I've never met one I can't take down! I love them all, and especially love 'killing' them and then carrying them off in my mouth to keep them away from my kitten friend Tart that I'm living with.*

*I carry little puffy balls around and actually will play fetch with you! I love my crinkly tunnel and racing around with my friend Tart.*

*When that's all said and done, I will reward you with purrs and snuggles, and love to be petted. You will love that too because I am as soft as a bunny rabbit. I have a beautiful long tail and my foster mom says that she thinks I'll grow up to be a lithe leggy little lady!*

*I have super tidy litter box and eating habits that my foster mom really appreciates too! I met one of the resident cats and puffed up a little the first time but was fine and curious the second time. So, I'm sure with proper slow introductions I'll be fine with other cats, and dogs too. I didn't meet any children but love people so I'm sure that would be fine too!*

*I hope that my forever home will have people who are around a lot, or other animals to play with because I have a lot of energy and could use some help burning it off!*

*I can't wait to find my perfect forever home! Act fast! I won't be here long!*

Here's an example of an adult that was relinquished to us, that we found a great home for:

*Hi! My name is Sonya and I am a super chill, sweet and petite 2.5 year old girl who is ready for my furever home! I was adopted once last spring after I had my babies and they were all adopted, but I found out that I do NOT like other cats at all, and that what I really need is a quiet environment where I can do what I like to do best - which is to nap and be loved on by my human!*

*I really think I would be happiest in a nice quiet place with one or two adult humans who understand and accept my very chill nature and will be patient with me as I adjust to my final move to my furever home.*

*I am a very unique kitty in that I'm not really all that interested in playing, though my catnip mouse loses his felt ear frequently, so I guess I do play, but you just won't see me doing it much, because I like to play alone.*

*I am also not the least bit curious about what is behind closed doors and am also not the least bit mischievous (I have yet to knock anything off a tabletop! Go figure!) I also don't mind getting into my carrier when we need to go out of the house together.*

*I am not vocal except when I see you and want to say hi or remind you that I'm excited to eat! Then you may hear my soft meow.*

*I have super tidy litter box habits and love to use my large horizontal cardboard scratching pad. I am quite happy in a room by myself, so if your place is small and quiet, I might be the perfect fit for you! I am so chill that you might think I'm older than my years, but being a young cat, we will likely have many years together to bond and enjoy each other's company.*

*In a blind touch test, I know I would be mistaken for a bunny rabbit 100% of the time because my fur is so soft. I LOVE making biscuits in my cat bed or on you if we are cuddling, and I like to do that a lot! I will even let you trim my nails when I'm done kneading. I also have the cutest habit of rolling around and rubbing my face with my back feet! Why? I have no idea but it sure is adorable.*

*If it's laid back, low maintenance and affectionate you're looking for, I'm your little girl!*

## And one more kitten bio example

*Hi, my name is Willow, and I am a lovely 11-week-old gray girl kitten - as sweet as I am soft (so sez my foster mom)! But don't think that means I can't keep up with my brothers in a litter-wide smackdown! I can give as good as I get in any wrestling match. As much as I love my siblings, I also love humans, and will ask to be picked up and then climb straight to your shoulder to give you face and neck rubs, and you may even get some of my sweet kitty kisses!*

*My 5 siblings and I came to Colorado from Oklahoma as orphans. I love playing with them all. After a meal we will all fall into a purring kitten pile and groom each other til we fall asleep. Yep! Cuteness overload! We are all super friendly, and not scared of anything but sudden loud noises.*

*When not playing or cuddling with my siblings, I love to try to catch flying feather toys, stalk toy mousies, and bat around jingly, scrunchie or sparkly ball toys. I am very good with her vertical and horizontal scratchers and I let my foster mom trim my nails when I'm not in zoom mode!*

*My siblings and I have all touched noses with the resident friendly adult cats and would likely do well with your friendly and accepting adult cats. I would probably be ok with dogs as well once properly introduced. I met teenage kids, but no young children, but again, if properly introduced would likely do well.*

Feel free to use any of these ideas in your bios - all you need to do is think like a kitten! Can you imagine describing from your point of view how much you love to play and snuggle and just be all around goofy?

Let us know if you need more inspiration - we're here to help!

Thank you so much for all you do,

**Karen, Brenda and the PetFinder Team**

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