

Why I can't foster a shelter cat:

"I DON'T HAVE THE SPACE" -- I used to think this too. Then a cat came along that really, really needed me ... and I made the space! All it takes is a small spare bedroom or office, a bathroom, or even a corner where you can set up a playpen cage, which you can borrow from us! While we do need foster cats to stay separate from your own cats, it doesn't take much space to do that. And remember, whatever space you have at home is probably more than the kitty has here at the shelter now! *[Editor's note: This is also what I tell people who think they can't adopt a big dog because they live in an apartment--Emily]*

"I MIGHT GET ATTACHED" -- OK, yes, you might. But no matter how difficult it is to bring your kitty back to the shelter, just knowing that you're helping to save a life should ease any short-term pain. When you take in a foster cat, it gives us room to help other cats that might otherwise be brought to shelters that euthanize for time and space. It also lets us learn more about a cat's personality than we ever could in a shelter environment, which, in turn, makes the cat much easier to adopt out. Yes, some cats are harder to bring back than others, but be strong! You can do it! (And yes, I've kept one foster cat, but not the 60 that followed that first one!)

"MY OWN CATS WON'T TOLERATE A FOSTER CAT, ESPECIALLY AN ADULT" -- If you have a separate room, this shouldn't be much of a problem. Yes, your cat(s) will know there is another cat in the house, and they may be a little upset about it at first. But chances are they'll get over it pretty quickly, especially if you make sure you wash your hands after visiting with the foster cat and keep the cats from seeing each other if possible. Feliway Comfort Zone diffusers or Rescue Remedy flower essence can also help. Tell your cats they need to help do their part too! Eventually, they will be totally nonchalant about the whole idea of fostering. My cats no longer even bat an eyelash when a foster cat comes into the house.

"I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE ANOTHER CAT" -- This one is easy! You can get all your food and litter from MRFRS if you like, and MRFRS covers all medical expenses associated with foster cats! If you buy your own supplies for fosters, save the receipts so you can take a tax deduction!

"A SHELTER CAT MIGHT GET MY OWN CATS SICK" -- If you follow basic health protocols, such as washing your hands between handling cats and wearing an over-shirt when handling the foster cat, you shouldn't have any problems. A sick cat should be kept in a separate room, and bedding/clothing should be washed with bleach after use. We are also happy to provide you with a bottle of heavy-duty kennel disinfectant for cleaning if you like!

"SOMEONE ELSE WILL SAY YES. THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER FOSTER HOMES" -- They won't and there aren't. It's that simple. We have lots of folks who will take kittens, but very few who will take adults, and even fewer who will take sick, feral, and/or rabies-quarantine cats. Please help us! Kittens are easy for us to place. But our poor adults need help too.

"I ALREADY HAVE A FOSTER CAT" -- All right. Well, this gets you partly off the hook. But wouldn't your foster kitty like a friend?

