

## Sierra



My husband and I adopted Sierra (formerly named Alyssa) from the Humane Society in July 2009 when my husband was home on leave from his current tour in Iraq. We had another cat (also adopted from the Humane Society) who had passed away in May 2009 and we really weren't looking to adopt another one right away but somehow we ended up at the Humane Society one afternoon while he was home. Sierra was one of the first kittens we saw, she was in a cage with several others in the main walkway of the cat area. She was the only one that would play with your fingers or come near the sides of the cage. We decided to ask to get her out and play with her. We immediately fell in love and decided that we would take her home. She was just the right mix of playful and loving for us.

My husband returned to Iraq after only having her home for a day or so and when we first brought her home she was very shy and did not want me to leave her anywhere by herself. We kept her in our office for the most part until she got used to the people and the house. She would cry like crazy if I left the room. After a few days we let her start exploring the rest of the house and at first she wanted nothing to do with it. She stayed in the office and didn't go any farther. After my husband left I had to return to work and I think that is what forced her to come out of the office. We live with my parents and I guess she got lonely so she ventured out of the room to find the people. Now we can't keep her contained! She has become very independent and roams the entire house, getting in to anything and everything. She is very curious. Her favorite place to be is on the back of the couch or the back of my desk where she can see out the windows. She will occasionally still cry when she thinks she has lost the people but now it seems to be more of an easy way to figure out where we are because if someone hears her they eventually call out "What Sierra?" and she comes running.

She has some quirky habits, the funniest one being that she drinks out of the dog's water bucket instead of her own dish. My parent's have two outside dogs who occasionally come inside and we have a large mop bucket for them to drink out of. Sierra took to drinking out of that bucket immediately and now only drinks out of that bucket. She drinks out of her dish only if she can't get to the bucket (we sometimes put her in one of the rooms to keep her contained while we clean or if we need to leave for a long period of time because she is still in kitten "get into everything" mode) or she thinks she won't be able to get to it for a long period of time. I keep her in my bedroom at night and as soon as I let her out in the morning the first place she goes is to the kitchen to get a drink out of the bucket. We didn't realize that she had really "claimed" that bucket as hers until the other night when we let the dogs inside. She was in the other room but as soon as she heard the dogs drinking out of "her" bucket she came running in and stood up on her back legs trying to intimidate them and shoo them away from the bucket. As soon as the dogs would walk away she would leave the room but if they tried to drink again she came back immediately. It was hilarious but I felt really bad for the dogs because they would just look at me like "What the heck?"

She has definitely made my life brighter, especially with the loss of our other cat and my husband being away. It is great to have a companion again. She has definitely come in to her own and has her own personality and attitude. She keeps me and my parents laughing and on our toes. I believe that her coming into our lives is a blessing and in turn I feel that we are providing her with a safe, happy place to live and enjoy life.