

How To Help Your Foster Pet Get Adopted



There are 3 things that get animals adopted much quicker:

1. Great photos on the animal's profile.
2. Having a well-written animal bio (text about the animal)
3. Other tips

Great photos

When someone is looking for a pet to adopt, they'll generally be scrolling through profiles of many other animals. Having great photos will increase the chance that the potential adopter will click on your animal and view more details.

Animal bio

Find the profile of the animal on the [AWL NSW website](#) (if not there, the animal is not currently available for adoption). In many cases, the profile may be able to be improved.

Feel free to update it and send it to the Foster Care Officer to update on the website:

- **The first sentence** is the most important and should be captivating, unique, and interesting. E.g., "Freddy is a 5-year-old staffy x, desexed and vaccinated" is helpful information but not a good opening liner. Try something like "FETCH CHAMPION NEEDS A HOME" or "GENTLE GIANT LOOKING FOR A LAP TO SIT ON" or "Freddy loves you already. And he hasn't even met you yet..." [Here's an example](#) of another unique and effective first sentence. If the animal is very old, sometimes including the age in the first sentence can be effective.
- For **the middle paragraphs**, use positive language to highlight the positive aspects about the unique personality and adorable traits of the animal. E.g., "sweet and loving", "loves playing with kids", "will consume any and all delicious treats". This is where you should include a few paragraphs of info about what the animal's favourite toys are, favourite treats, mention that they like children or other animals (if this is the case) and unique quirks. Try to include some humour where possible and include if the animal is toilet-trained, can sit, shake, drop etc.
- **The last sentence** of an animal profile should be a 'call to action'. E.g., "If you think I might be the perfect pet for you, have your people call my people". Or "Contact AWL NSW today to meet me if I am the furry friend you've been looking for".
- Write from the animal's perspective if you are a confident writer. E.g., "Hi, my name is Rocky and I truly love delicious treats. My favourite toys are..." – Rocky.
- Avoid saying "he's happy here and would be fine staying if he doesn't find a home". We are trying to convey a message that the animal is looking for a new home, not that the potential adopter may be taking away your pet. The goal of fostering is to bring in an animal and help them find a new home, then help others.
- Avoid using abbreviations or shelter jargon. Things like TLC, resource guarding, barrier reactive, dog-reactive/selective/aggressive, leash reactive, Foster-To-Adopt, foster fail, behaviour modification plan/BMP should be avoided.
- "Must have breed experience" should be avoided in both the animal profile and as a requirement. We would be excluding more than 90% of potential adopters for a perceived benefit of finding someone 'perfect' for the animal. When in reality, there are many perfect adopters for an animal who haven't owned the exact breed previously. Plus, in most cases [we guess the breed wrong](#).

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- Never use 'stop' language. Writing no kids/no kids under x years, hates other animals, does not like men, has FIV, is very jumpy/mouthy, barks a lot etc will usually cause people to 'stop' being interested in the animal. It can turn away perfectly good adopters. E.g., if it says "no kids", this could cause someone to wonder why. Has the dog bitten a child? Will the dog then bite an adult or a visitor? When someone reads a stop sign, the lack of detail often leads the potential adopter to fill in the blanks on their own. A friendlier approach is "I love humans so much that I don't want to share the attention, so I am looking for a home as the only furry friend". Or "I can be a little bit shy with new people but after I'm used to you, I promise I'll be your best friend!" Pet bios are also not the place to mention FIV. [Click here](#) for more info.
- Telling the story of the animal can help create an emotional connection.
- Avoid generic text where possible and focus on the unique aspects of the animal.

Other tips

- a) Respond to enquiries as quickly as possible. Sometimes potential adopters will contact several organisations at once so if you reply sooner, there's a higher chance your foster animal will be met sooner and potentially adopted.
- b) Be available for the potential adopter to meet your foster animal ASAP.
- c) When speaking to potential adopters, always communicate the positives with the animal first and then discuss things like ongoing training or other things needed.
- d) When a potential adopter has spoken to you, send extra pictures/videos of the animal to keep them interested/excited to meet the animal.
- e) When the animal has great photos and a well-written profile, ask the Foster Care Officer if they can: a) click 'Update' on the shelter system for the animal (this will move it to the first spot on the website) and b) Post on AWL NSW social media.
- f) Post the animal on social media, group chats etc as relevant. **Note:** You must include the microchip number (on the info sheet you are sent when you first foster the animal) of the animal in any advertisements when promoting for adoption.

Examples of good animal profiles

- [Sky](#) - timid cat.
- [Jess](#) - good first sentence and paragraph for a friendly cat who suits most homes.
- [Pickles](#) and [Buddy](#) - friendly dogs who would suit most homes.
- [Hunnie](#) - shy cat. Focus on positives but sometimes it is better to say/show it as it is.
- [Grandma Tiddles](#) - 17-year-old cat.
- [Barley](#) the rabbit - was available for 6 months, got adopted the day after this post.
- [Rain](#) - using humour and similes.
- [Kobie](#) - job interview. He was hired/adopted the following day.
- [Rex](#) - shy/nervous boy.
- [Brandon](#) - bait and switch... It's the cat up for adoption...
- [Chester](#) - good first sentence.
- [Nina](#) - telling her story.
- Dogs - [Rhi Rhi](#), [Butter](#), [Rusky](#), [Bo](#), [Tidda](#), [Max](#)

[Effective dog marketing video](#) (37m). A lot of this is also relevant to other animals.