



## Gunner: What to Expect

**Gunner is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home.** Gunner is a smart and playful young pup who loves to go for walks and play fetch! He needs a dog experienced home with a patient person who has time to continue working on setting boundaries and can keep up with his training using the same positive reinforcement techniques we use at OHS. Gunner is an easily excited dog who loves people; however, he tends to be nervous when meeting someone new. He would not do well in a home with a lot of hustle and bustle (such as a high-rise apartment or busy neighborhood), one with cats or small animals, or one with young children. He easily accepts new people into his social circle with the use of treats and taking things slow, and once he feels comfortable, he thinks he is a lap dog, and will adorably solicit lots of cuddles and affection.

His excitability is most visible when playing with toys, playing with dogs, and when meeting people. Gunner can get wound up by seeing or greeting other dogs. On Leash, this can cause him to bounce around and whine in excitement; off leash, he charges in, and most dogs will find this overwhelming. With people, Gunner likes to jump up on them, and if the jumping continues, he will start grabbing onto loose fitting clothes, the leash, or purses/bags. When on a leashed walk in a previous home, Gunner did jump out and bite at a passerby, breaking skin. With training, Gunner is learning to trust his handlers and to develop restraint when overwhelmed and overstimulated. Being mindful of Gunner's emotional state will be important to keep him, his handlers, and bystanders comfortable and safe. We've been very successful using positive training techniques, asking Gunner to sit and wait for pets to help him in his overexcited state and using toys during play so he has an appropriate outlet for his energy.

Gunner will need your help with continuing potty training. He does best when he can stick to a routine and has a predictable schedule. You may need to take him out every couple of hours until he gets the routine and layout of your home. Be prepared for accidents, especially as he settles in. He is crate trained to help with his potty training. Access to a yard or an appropriate area to eliminate frequently will help him be successful. Having him on a leash while in the home for the first few weeks will help you control and guide him to make the right decisions.

### Here's how to help Gunner settle in during your first months together:



**Use treats to build trust.** Maintaining and continuing his training will create a bond and a form of communication between two species who don't understand each other.

**Designate a "safe spot" in your home.** You can use a crate to confine him to a smaller area where he has access to water, bed, and toys (see picture). When you are unable to supervise him, leave him in his safe spot.

**Practice home alone training.** We've been working on crate training and can have him crated for up to 2 hours. To continue crate training, start by feeding his meals in the crate and work your way up from there.

**Be his advocate.** It's okay to ask someone to stop or prevent a person from coming up to say hi to your dog. Watch his body language and help him out of situations if he appears stressed.

**Gunner needs daily exercise to reduce stress.** Gunner loves to go for runs, play fetch, and for walks. Giving him a healthy outlet for some of his energy will help him settle during calm hours at home.

**Skip the dog park!** Don't take him to busy places where he will have lots of uncontrolled interactions with people or other dogs (such as Saturday Market, dog parks, coffee shops, etc.). He will need to form a bond with you and work on recall training before he can have off leash access at a dog park.

**If you're having people over, put Gunner on leash.** Once everyone is sitting down and Gunner is calm you can drop his leash and allow him to decide if he wants to go say hi to your company. Don't allow your company to approach Gunner as this may startle him.

**Visiting the Vet:** Unless it's an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Start with positive visits just for treats. Vet visits will more than likely be scary, but if your dog already trusts you, your presence may help them feel more comfortable.

Try using **Adaptil (Dog Appeasing Pheromone)** or **Rescue Remedy by Bach Flower Essences**. These products may help dogs settle in new environments by easing the stress associated with change.

**Patience will come in handy for you.** Gunner is a sensitive dog who responds best to positive reinforcement and reward-based training. He needs an understanding, calm owner who has the time and desire to work with him. He will pay you back by supplying love and enthusiasm!

## **We're here to help!**

We want Gunner to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Gunner, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact Annika at **(503) 802-6713** or [annikah@oregonhumane.org](mailto:annikah@oregonhumane.org).

Please keep in touch so we can continue to help you now and in the future. Reach out if you have questions or concerns, or just to give an update. We love to see photos and hear how our friends are doing! Thank you for adopting from the Oregon Humane Society. Congratulations on your new dog!