



## Fish 299881: What to Expect

**Fish is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home.** Fish is a playful young dog who loves romps in the yard, going for walks, and playing with his dog friends. Fish is a puppy still learning to regulate his emotions, but he has a lot of zest and curiosity for life. When excited Fish can jump up on handlers, and if overstimulated more he might grab onto things such as loose-fitting clothing, the leash, or bags/purses with his mouth. During his time at OHS, we've been successful using positive training techniques to teach him more appropriate behaviors like keeping all four feet on the floor and sitting & waiting for leashing. He is eager and motivated to learn and loves the engagement from learning something new. A training class would benefit both human & puppy in learning how to communicate with each other, but also help Fish regulate his emotions as he grows into a well-adjusted adult.

Fish is still a puppy entering into adolescents and has a lot of learning and growing to do, he can be nervous and uncomfortable with loud noises from trucks, trains, or other vehicles as they drive by, sometimes even in the distance. When Fish is comfortable, he is confident, curious, and ready to explore new spaces while practicing his training. But when he is nervous, he will be scared, apprehensive, and disengage with his human. When he's feeling fearful, Fish may tuck his tail, try to make himself small, or look for an escape from what's scaring him. By pairing these new and potentially frightening experiences with treats and praise, we can help Fish feel more confident in these situations and build trust in us as handlers that we have his best interest at the forefront. Future adopters will need to continue giving Fish positive experiences and exposure to the big wide loud world by using reward-based training to further his progress and help him feel more confident in these situations. Due to his fear with loud noises surrounding vehicular traffic, we don't think Fish would do well in a loud and/or busy neighborhood or in a dwelling in a downtown area.

Fish's excitement can also cause him to rush into interactions with people and dogs, he may bark, whine, and pull on the leash in attempts to greet. Allowing him to meet dogs on leash can manifest frustration and reinforce this behavior, teaching Fish that barking and pulling mean he can go say hi to dogs. Fish has been successful working on sitting and waiting until he's released to play with other dogs or ignoring dogs and focusing on his handler while out and about in the world. Continuing to teach Fish these behaviors will help him learn to regulate his emotions in times of intense excitement or in moments of fear and anxiety.

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

**Use treats and toys to build trust.** Maintaining and continuing Fish's training will create a bond and a form of communication between two species who don't understand each other. The more positive experiences Fish has with their owners, the more valuable you will become in high distracting situations.

**If you're having people over, put Fish on leash so they learn to not dart out the front door or jump all over people.** Once everyone is sitting down and calm you can drop the leash and allow your dog to decide if they want to go say hi to your guests. Ensure your guests ask Fish to sit before being pet so they're rewarded for keeping 4 feet on the floor.

**Fish needs daily exercise to reduce stress.** Fish loves to go for hikes, walks in a quiet space, play fetch, and chase a flirt pole. Giving your dog a healthy outlet for some of their energy will help them settle during calm hours at home.

**Work on having Fish settle on a mat, dog bed, or cot** and gently praise them for lying down. If they get up to pace, call them back and use a treat to lure them into a down again. If Fish is on leash, you can hold them with approximately 4 feet of leash and wait until they offer a settle by lying down. Softly praise and treat when they do this.

**Be your dog's advocate.** It's okay to ask someone to stop or prevent a person from letting their dog come up to say hi to your dog. Watch their body language and help your dog out of situations if they appear stressed.

**Practice crate training.** Start by feeding meals in a wire crate and work your way up from there. It will be in your best interest to **slowly** increase time in the crate, so they view it as a safe, comfortable spot. When you cannot monitor your dog in the home, allow them some time to settle and relax in the crate.

**“Puppy proof” your home and practice tether training** to prevent them from getting into puppy/adolescent trouble. When home have Fish on leash, attached to you or tethered to a large piece of furniture as you go about your daily routine. This will help with potty training, bonding, and creating boundaries within the home. Let Fish drag the leash around the house or yard from time to time to simulate “freedom”, but do not let them off leash until they can 100% be trusted not to get into things they shouldn’t. This could take up to a few weeks. Crate Fish when you cannot watch them. This will ensure their puppy curiosity doesn’t get them into any trouble. You will have long lasting success if you follow this method.

**Take a training class.** Fish would benefit from taking some training classes with their new owners and would love to learn more alongside their family in a training class. Training classes help strengthen the bond between owner and dog by creating clear and precise communication so there are no misunderstandings. You can find more info about our training classes on our website at (<https://www.oregonhumane.org/training/training-at-ohs/>).

**Visiting the Vet:** Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Fish does very well at the vet, they handle meeting new people well. The vet can still be a scary place. Bringing tasty treats like cheese and/or hot dogs can help make the experience more pleasant.

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.

### **We’re here to help!**

We want Fish to be successful in your home. We’re available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Fish, 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!