

## Princess Peach 298948: What to Expect

**Princess Peach is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home.** Princess Peach is a sweet little girl who loves to play, cuddle, and explore. She had a difficult start to life spending most of her time in a crate and then brought out for only a couple hours at a time to play. Due to this lack of socialization early on in life, Peach can be very shy and nervous in stressful situations. She does not trust people easily and will dart, hide, growl, and try to escape when she feels uncomfortable or pressured by people she doesn't know. During her time at OHS we've been working on helping her learn to trust people and the world around her through training, enrichment, and positive exposure. Peach can be nervous when walking on leash and when encountering something she perceives as new and/or scary, she will lower herself to the ground and attempt to get away. When she's excited on her walks she will pull on the leash, dart to the end & through doors, and lightly vocalize at the sight of people or other dogs. We've been successful walking Peach on leash by taking things at her pace, implementing training techniques, using rewards like toys and treats, and building confidence in her relationship with people and her surroundings by advocating for her space. Peach loves playing fetch and tug with toys and her true border collie spirit comes out in these situations. She would do best in a home that will continue her training so that she will learn to trust humans and the world around her. Peach has taken to training excitedly, she already knows how to sit, wait, drop it, is crate trained, and has been introduced to agility equipment. Due to her past, Peach does struggle with potty training. She has been trained to eliminate on towels as if it were a potty pad, and could have future accidents if not addressed.

We've been able to introduce Peach to other dogs during her time at OHS to gauge her comfort with dogs of various size and temperament. Princess Peach finds the company of other dogs to be intimidating and when initially introduced to other dogs will pull away to hide and avoid interaction, her border collie behavior engages around other dogs who are playing and she will attempt to herd other dogs, nipping at their feet and flanks, which could cause an altercation if not interrupted. She does not initiate engagement with other dogs and due to this we feel she would not enjoy living in a home with another dog. Princess Peach can exist around other neutral dogs with little issue, but she finds the presence of dogs uncomfortable and overstimulating. It will be important in building her confidence to not let dogs or people approach her on walks. Asking strangers to stop or creating space will continue to help build Peach's confidence.

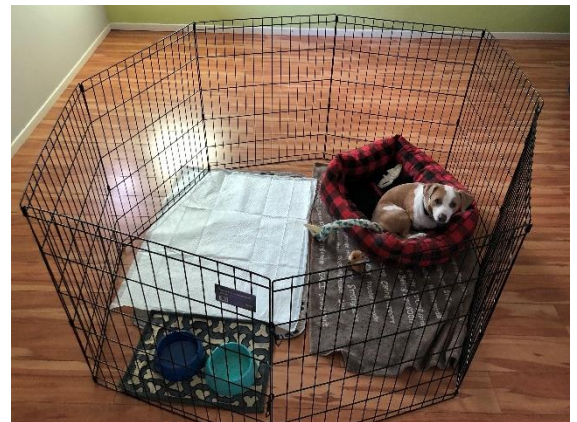
Princess Peach is a herding dog and thus has a lot of genetic drive toward small animals, and we don't believe she could live with any other small pets like cats or small children. Children could frighten her into fleeing, leave a door open she could dart out of, or Peach could herd them around the home nipping at their heels as if they were sheep. She would do best in an adult only home as the only pet.

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

**Use an exercise pen** to confine Peach to a small area when you are not home or able to supervise them (see picture). Give them a bed, water, favorite toy, and a potty pad. This "safe spot" will also be a great place to put them when you have visitors to your home, so they don't have to worry about interacting with everyone if they're not comfortable.

**Patience will come in handy for you.** Peach responds best to positive reinforcement and reward-based training. They will need an understanding, calm owner who has the time and desire to work on helping them learn to live in a home. Princess Peach will pay you back by supplying love and enthusiasm!

**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. Explain that Peach is not comfortable with



*Princess Peach's "safe spot" when no one is home.*

strange people or dogs and doesn't enjoy meeting strangers while on their walk. Tossing a treat on the ground is more effective for your dog to make positive associations with new people. Distance is calming.

**Let them drag a leash attached to their collar** for the first week or two inside and outside the home. Fast movements are startling, and it will take time for them to be okay with you approaching and removing the leash. If you go slow at the beginning, you'll build a trusting relationship. Treats always help!

**Allow for time to build trust.** Always let Peach decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Princess Peach decide that they enjoy spending time with you by coming closer for pets, jumping next to you on the couch, and playing with toys with you.

**Supervise your dog outside.** Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Peach out alone. They are small and could easily hide under your deck or a bush - or slip through a gap in your fence! They do like to go for short walks and go outside to potty but need some time to build confidence to go on longer excursions in even the quietest of neighborhoods. A predictable routine will help Princess Peach gain confidence steadily.

**Limit introductions to new people.** Take your time to get to know Princess Peach before introducing them to someone new. They may need to meet a new person multiple times before feeling comfortable with strangers. Treats and allowing Peach to approach as they feel comfortable will be best. New people should just completely ignore Princess Peach at first – playing hard to get is the way to their heart.

**Use routine to get Princess Peach comfortable in their new home.** It will take a couple weeks for Princess Peach to feel comfortable in their new home and with you. Having a predictable schedule will help them adjust to their new home.

When you have people over, **it's okay to put Princess Peach in another room.** If you'd like Princess Peach to meet a guest, put them on a leash and give them time to adjust before allowing your guest to pet. Let it be Princess Peach's choice to go to them for pets or hang back and watch. Crowding Princess Peach or forcing them to interact can make fearful behavior worse.

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

**Don't take Princess Peach to busy places** where they will have lots of uncontrolled interactions with people/dogs (such as Saturday Market, off-leash dog parks, coffee shops, walks down Hawthorne St., Home Depot, etc.).

**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.

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

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