



Basco 300943: What to Expect

Basco is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Basco is an incredibly sweet and loving adolescent dog. He loves playing with toys, playing with other dogs, and crawling into your lap for some snuggles. Basco came to OHS through our Second Chance program, so his history is a bit of a mystery. We know that Basco was previously in a foster home with little exposure to the hustle and bustle of the world, but he found the companionship of a resident dog helpful and comfortable. Basco can be a very worried and timid dog in new situations, with new people, and around “scary” things. When Basco is comfortable he will play with toys, is motivated to learn through treat training, is curious to investigate, and is affectionate; often seeking a lap to sit in for pets. When Basco is uncomfortable he communicates that with his body language, becoming avoidant, shut down, or growling, barking, and if cornered further showing teeth and snapping at people he doesn’t know who approach. Basco is uncomfortable in situations with new or strange people when they approach his kennel or when he’s on a leashed walk. He can become reactive, with barking and lunging. These are the tools Basco has learned in his early life to help keep him safe. During his time at OHS, we’ve been successful using positive reinforcement techniques to introduce Basco to the world to help him build confidence and trust. He currently successfully works with 20 people a day and is introduced to more frequently. He will need continued training in his new home so he can grow into a well-adjusted adult dog and trust that his humans have his best interest in mind. Training classes with a professional dog trainer will help Basco and owners learn to communicate best with each other and could help Basco grow into a more confident adult dog.

Basco will need a calm home without a lot of foot traffic and away from the hustle and bustle of a busy neighborhood. He will need owners who understand he will likely never be a patio dog or a social butterfly with strangers and they should continue training to build confidence and trust in Basco and Basco in his humans. We believe Basco would flourish with a resident dog to help demonstrate how to be a “pet dog”. We don’t think he would do well in a home with children or small animals like cats as their unpredictable and loud nature could frighten him.

Here’s how to help Basco settle in during your first months together:

Allow for time to build trust. Always let Basco decide if they want to come closer to you. Don’t force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Basco decide that they enjoy spending time with you by coming closer for pets, jumping next to you on the couch, and following your resident dog around.

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 Basco is not comfortable with strange people 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.

If you’re having people over, put Basco 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 Basco to sit before being pet so they’re rewarded for keeping 4 feet on the floor.

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

Patience will come in handy for you. Basco 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. Basco will pay you back by supplying love and enthusiasm!

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 Basco 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 Basco 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 Basco 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. Basco 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/>).

We expect that Basco will be overwhelmed by everything they encounter at first. During the critical first months in a new home, their safety will depend on your good judgment and forethought. **A frightened dog will look for any occasion to bolt when startled: out of vehicles, out the front door, or slipping out of the leash. Keep a very tight grip of that leash!**

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.

Behavioral Medication for your new dog

This dog has been prescribed one or more medications to help reduce anxiety and impulsivity during their time in the shelter. You may be provided with a supply of this dog’s medication(s) along with specific dosing instructions at the time of adoption. We would recommend that you continue giving this medication for at least the first 6 months after adoption to help reduce stress that may be associated with this dog making a smooth transition into your home. In order to avoid any adverse side effects (including behavioral and systemic) please do not abruptly stop administering these medications or discontinue use without consulting your veterinarian. When it appears time to stop giving your dog these medications, please contact your veterinarian for an appropriate protocol to make sure you have enough medication to allow for a gradual weaning off process. Please do not substitute other supplements or medications (including your own prescriptions) without consulting a veterinary professional.

During this process, please watch for any signs of worsening fear or anxiety. If the dog appears to be getting worse during the weaning off process, contact your veterinarian as longer treatment or a different combination of medications may be needed. Remember that successful behavioral rehabilitation often relies on a combination of pharmaceutical therapy as well as various training modalities.

We’re here to help!

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

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!