

Mochi 303033: What to Expect

Mochi is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Mochi is a sweet and affectionate boy who loves his people and taking leisurely walks around the neighborhood. Mochi is a sensitive boy who can be fearful in new and chaotic environments. When nervous and scared he will avoid people, freeze & shut down, and refuse to eat. When comfortable, Mochi loves treats of all kinds, meeting new dogs, and crawling into your lap for comforting pets and attention. It will take time for Mochi to become comfortable in his new home and with his new family. It will be important his new family give him a safe space to retreat when overwhelmed and allow Mochi to come out of his shell as he feels comfortable and not push him for interactions before he's ready. It could take a couple weeks before Mochi is relaxed enough in his new home to feel comfortable going for walks, eating his food, or seeking affection/attention from his new family.

Mochi has previously lived in a home with another dog his size and temperament, and we believe he would be comfortable as the only dog or with another dog who matches his personality. Large overly excited dogs who chase, jump, or pester him will be very overwhelming for Mochi. We do not know how Mochi would behave around cats. Due to Mochi's sensitive nature, we believe he would not do well in a home with small children who are still learning to regulate their emotions and master their impulse control. Mochi would prefer a home with respectful teenagers and adults who can respect his space. A low traffic home away from the hustle and bustle of a busy neighborhood would also be ideal for Mochi. Allowing Mochi to come out of his shell as he feels comfortable will lead to longer lasting trust.

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

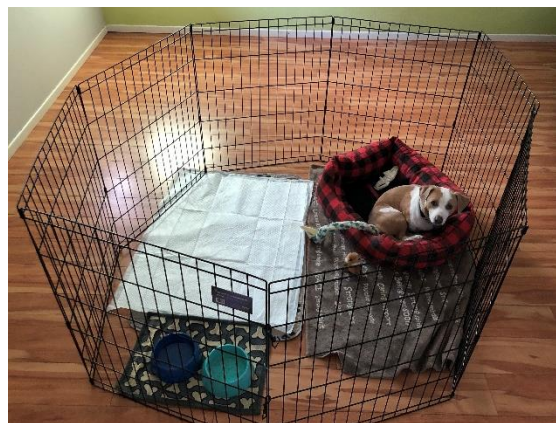
Use treats and toys to build trust. Maintaining and continuing Mochi's training will create a bond and a form of communication between two species who don't understand each other. The more positive experiences Mochi has with their owners, the more valuable you will become in high distracting situations.

Use an exercise pen to confine Mochi 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. Mochi 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. Mochi will pay you back by supplying love and enthusiasm!

We expect that Mochi 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!**

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 Mochi 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.



Mochi's "safe spot" when no one is home.

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 Mochi decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Mochi 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.

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Mochi 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.

Don't take Mochi 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 is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Mochi does 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 Mochi to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Mochi, 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!