

Romy 302242: What to Expect

Romy is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Romy is a very sweet, gentle, and goofy puppy! She adores other dogs, and once comfortable, wants nothing more than to worm her whole body into your lap for snuggles. Prior to coming to OHS, Romy was born on and had been living on a porch with her siblings, parents, and one grandparent. She did not receive the socialization she needed as a young puppy to build her confidence in new situations and environments and the world off of that porch. She does not yet understand how to be a “pet dog” and will need help from her future adopters to introduce her positively and slowly to living in a pet home. Romy is still learning how the human world works and how to navigate through it. During her time at OHS, Romy has learned to walk on a leash, has explored many new spaces, and has been introduced to many new people. For Romy, it’s all about going slow and building up her confidence. She will need patient owners who are willing to continue using the same positive reinforcement-based training techniques that we’ve been successful with here at OHS! Romy does best alongside a confident and social helper dog to follow around and gain guidance from. She loves playing with other dogs and feels more comfortable interacting with new people when she has a helper dog around to boost her confidence.

Romy is still learning how to potty when outside for her walks and play time, she can be both nervous or too excited when outside to be comfortable enough to eliminate. She is very well trained to a target towel, similar to a potty pad, but adopters will need to work diligently to get her comfortable eliminating outside. Romy will do best in a calm home with low traffic, as the hustle and bustle of people can be very intimidating for her. For this same reason, Romy will do best in a home without younger children, as their fast and unpredictable movements can be very frightening for her. High rise apartments and/or busy downtown like neighborhoods will be very overwhelming and terrifying for Romy and could make potty training and exposure to the big wide world scarier than necessary. We expect that Romy 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!**

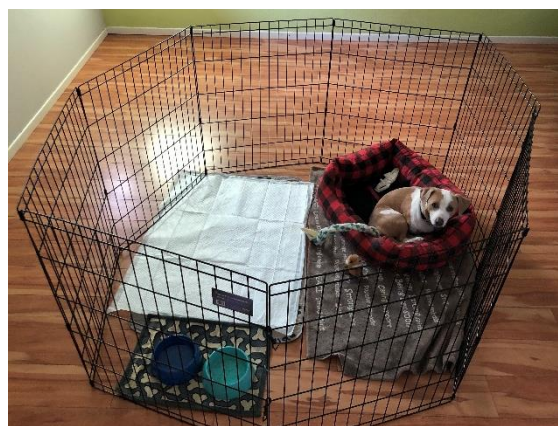
Here’s how to help Romy settle in during your first months together:

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

Use an exercise pen to confine Romy 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.

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



Romy’s “safe spot” when no one is home.

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

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Romy out alone. They are nervous 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.

Wait to take walks. Romy will need time to bond with you before you start taking them for walks. Give them a couple of days to get to know you and their new home, then practice walking around your yard/front of your residence before trying a walk around the block. Romy will do best walking alongside a confident canine companion. They're already doing a great job of checking in with their human at the other end of the leash – continue encouraging this behavior to help strengthen the bond by offering treats.

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

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