



Acorn 320168: What to Expect

Acorn is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Acorn is a brave and confident little puppy that has a zest for life and is looking for her adventure buddy! She's eager to learn new things, loves meeting new people and dogs, and loves her toys. Acorn came to OHS with her mom and litter, suffering from a ringworm infection. After receiving medical care from OHS' wonderful med team and having the chance to grow up in a loving foster home, Acorn returned to the shelter to find her forever family. All her love and excitement towards people can bubble over into overstimulated behaviors, like grabbing at loose fitting clothing or hair. In an adopted home, Acorn was eager to interact with her new owners but defaulted to these behaviors resulting in broken skin from a bite and was returned to the shelter. While in the Behavior Modification program, we've had success working with Acorn to teach her alternate behaviors, like sitting and waiting for attention, rather than asking for it with her sharp little teeth. Future adopters will need to be willing and able to continue these same positive reinforcement-based training methods we've had success with to continue her progress with learning to work through her overstimulated behaviors.

Acorn loves to learn and despite her age has caught on to a bunch of new manners like sit, down, wait, and leave it. She is in her key socialization period and it's important she has exposure to the world in neutral and positive ways. Her curiosity will help encourage her to grow into a confident adult dog with strong resiliency. Her new family will need to continue her training into adolescence and adulthood so she continues to be a model citizen with engagement, manners, and confidence. A dog training class can help both puppy and humans learn how to communicate and set each other onto the path of success. Acorn is an active puppy and will need positive outlets for her energy and training to help direct that energy into positive mannerisms.

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

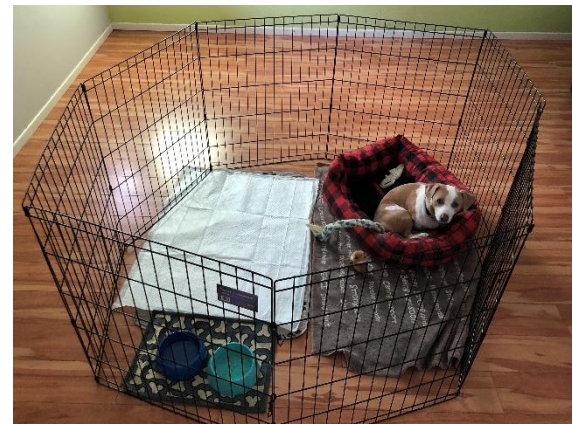
Use an exercise pen to confine Acorn to a small area when you are not home or able to supervise them (see picture). Give them a bed, water, favorite toy, and a potty pad. This "safe spot" will also be a great place to put them when you have visitors to your home, so they don't have to worry about interacting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

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

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

Acorn needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Acorn loves to go for runs, walks, 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 Acorn settle on a mat 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 Acorn 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.



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

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 Acorn 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 Acorn 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 Acorn 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. Acorn 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/>).

Skip the dog park. Don’t take Acorn to busy places where they will have lots of uncontrolled interactions with people or other dogs (such as Saturday Market, dog parks, coffee shops, etc.). Taking leashed hikes to the river, playing in the backyard, or to places not frequented by many other off leash dogs will allow for exercise, but keep Acorn calm, safe, and engaged with you.

Visiting the Vet: Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Acorn 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 Acorn to be successful in your home. We’re available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Acorn, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact us at **(503) 285-1145** or BMODTrainers@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!