

Kringle 329352: What to Expect

Kringle is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Kringle is an adorable little chihuahua mix that loves other dogs! Big and small, he wiggles up to dogs of all sizes ready to make friends and scamper around. Kringle comes to OHS from a rural shelter, where he was surrendered with other dogs from this home. The previous caretakers of these dogs felt overrun with the number of dogs they had on the property and that proper care, time, and socialization could not be provided. While it was in Kringle's best interest to come into the shelter system, being removed from a property that was all he knew was overwhelming and frightening. Kringle can be nervous in new situations, he is quick to freeze and avoid human interaction, and if pushed too far, could attempt to snap to make scary things go away.

With the little amount of socialization and exposure to the outside world, Kringle found experiences like walking on leash to be new and frightening, causing him to pancake onto the ground and freeze to avoid walking. By using positive reinforcement-based training methods and the help of more confident dogs, we've been able to slowly introduce new experiences into Kringle's world! He's still putting in the work to feel comfortable and confident on leash and feels brave enough to play with other dogs while people are around. He'll need a dedicated adopter who's ready to continue having new experiences at a slow and steady pace and be able to advocate for his space if he seems overwhelmed. He'll need a quiet, low traffic home without younger children.

We expect that Kringle 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!**

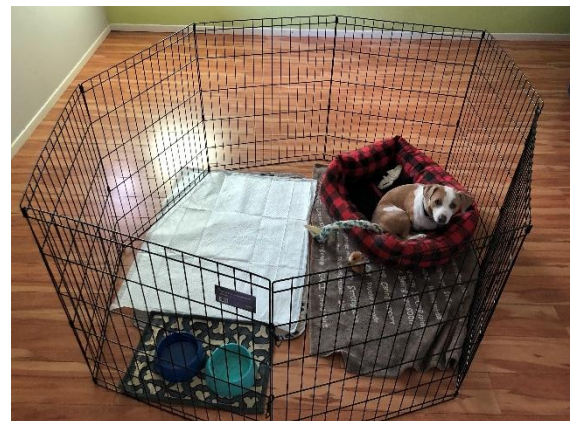
Kringle finds much of his confidence from other dogs. By watching and mirroring their behavior, Kringle feels much more confident in his choices, and can come out of his shell almost immediately. While we are not requiring, he goes to a home with a resident dog, we do think he would prefer a home with a dog and/or frequent exposure to other social and confident dogs. This will continue to help him come out of his shell and learn to trust people as he follows the guidance of the other dog(s). Kringle doesn't discriminate between the size, age, or play style of other dogs, but due to his small size owners need to be mindful of matching him with appropriate dogs.

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

Use an exercise pen to confine Kringle 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.

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 Kringle is not comfortable with people and doesn't enjoy meeting strangers while on their walk. 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!



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

Allow for time to build trust. Always let Kringle decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Kringle 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 Kringle 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 with other dogs and go outside to potty, but need some time to build confidence to go on longer excursions in even the quietest of neighborhoods.

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

Use routine to get Kringle comfortable in their new home. It will take a couple weeks for Kringle 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 Kringle in another room.** If you'd like Kringle to meet a guest, put them on a leash and give them time to adjust before allowing your guest to pet. Let it be Kringle's choice to go to them for pets or hang back and watch. Crowding Kringle or forcing them to interact can make fearful behavior worse.

Patience will come in handy for you. Kringle 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. Kringle 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 Kringle to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Kringle, 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!