



Snickers 332704: What to Expect

Snickers is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Snickers is a playful, exuberant, curious, and affectionate young dog who came all the way from Texas when their shelters needed to help create space for displaced pets during the disastrous floods. Snickers would love an active family who can show him how amazing the great outdoors of the PNW are. When Snickers arrived at OHS, he showed some conflicting behavior, at times being very fearful not wanting to walk on leash outside for walks, and at others overly excited to go for a walk that he was jumping and grabbing at the leash when staff entered his kennel. Due to the dichotomy of his behavior, he was moved into our Behavior Modification Program so we could work on building his confidence as well as channel his energy into appropriate behavior. Snickers is a quick study and enjoys learning new things through positive reinforcement based training, like using treats and play. He has learned to sit and wait for leashing and is gaining confidence while out on walks. His adoption comes with a pre and post adoption training session with one of our professional dog trainers, so you'll have the skills to help Snickers continue to be successful in his new home.

Snickers has been introduced to other dogs during his time at OHS, and at times he can be very overwhelmed, especially if the other dog runs up on him without slow, appropriate introductions. Snickers will choose to disengage and hide if uncomfortable or overwhelmed. Once he understands the other dog is just trying to play, he loves to engage in chase and wrestle with other dogs. Uncontrolled environments like the dog park or doggie daycare will be very overwhelming for him and he would much prefer controlled environments like a securely fenced backyard or SniffSpot with known dogs. Due to his energy levels when comfortable, we think he would be best suited for a home with older children who are dog savvy. As he could easily jump on, bump into, or steal the toys of smaller children. A pet meet is required before adoption to ensure the dogs are a match.

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

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

Snickers needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Snickers 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 Snickers settle on a mat, dog bed, or cot 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 Snickers 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.

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 Snickers 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 Snickers 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 Snickers 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. Snickers 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/>).

Don't take Snickers 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.).

Designate a "safe spot" in your home. You can use a crate or taller baby gates to confine them to a smaller area where they have access to water, bed, and toys. When you are unable to supervise the dog, leave them in their safe spot. Slowly work toward leaving them alone, unsecured, once they've had the chance to settle into your home and you know with certainty, they will be 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. Not all dogs enjoy meeting strangers, especially as they're building a bond with their family. Distance is calming.

Allow for time to build trust. Always let Snickers decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Snickers 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 routine to get Snickers comfortable in their new home. It will take a couple weeks for Snickers to feel comfortable in their new home and with you. Having a predictable schedule will help them adjust to their new home.

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

Visiting the Vet: Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Snickers 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 Snickers to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Snickers, 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!