



Benny 333802: What to Expect

Benny is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Benny is your typical doodle dog – he loves attention, play, and being a silly goofy guy. He came to OHS through our Second Chance program, so his history is a mystery. Benny is an active dog who likes to play and is still learning how to emotionally regulate and remain calm in moments of excitement and frustration. When frustrated or overly excited, Benny will bark, clack his teeth, and sometimes grab onto toys, loose fitting clothes, and the leash. Benny LOVES to play with toys, especially tennis balls, and fetch is his favorite game. He is still learning that in order for the ball to be thrown, he has to wait patiently for a person to pick it up and toss it. In moments of excitement for fetch, Benny has suddenly jumped to grab the tennis ball with his mouth when a person has reached for it, causing a tooth to break skin. We've been successful at OHS teaching Benny to sit & wait for the ball to be picked up and he is catching on quickly! His future owners will need to continue his work with impulse control exercises so he can continue to be successful during these high arousal activities and moments of frustration.

Being a doodle, Benny will need daily grooming and frequent trips to the groomer to keep his coat clean, short, and free of mats and tangles. At times, especially when he hasn't had an opportunity for exercise, Benny can become frustrated with overhandling. His future owners will need to continue to work on desensitizing him to brushing, clipping, and trimming especially around his face. Tangled and matted fur can be incredibly painful, and attempting to detangle something painful can lead to attempts to flee or big reactions to minimize pain like bucking or even snapping. Keeping a short, groomed coat will allow Benny to enjoy a pain free grooming experience.

We've been able to introduce Benny to multiple dogs during his time at OHS. Benny likely wasn't socialized around dogs during his key socialization period and doesn't understand how to appropriately interact with other dogs. He will bark at other dogs, even if they're indifferent or giving him signals to back off. If allowed to approach he will rush in and jump all over the other dog, which can be interpreted as very rude and lead to a misunderstanding or scuffle. If the other dog is not paying him attention and attempting to diffuse the situation, he will attempt to nip at their legs. Due to this behavior Benny is not a candidate for uncontrolled environments like the dog park, or doggie daycare. He needs to be the only pet in the home.

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

Use routine to get Benny comfortable in their new home. It will take a couple weeks for Benny to feel comfortable in their new home and with you. Having a predictable schedule will help them adjust to their new home.

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

Benny needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Benny 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 Benny 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 Benny 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 Benny 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 Benny 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 Benny 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. Benny 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/>).

Practice “Leave it.” Benny may bark and lunge if they see other dogs out on a walk. When a dog is sighted, **before** they start barking, say “leave it.” When they turn to look at you, reward with praise and a treat and walk away from the trigger. Distance is calming.

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 and safe to have loose.

Skip the dog park. Don’t take Benny 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.). Benny has shown us they don’t have an interest in being around other dogs/people. Taking leashed hikes to the river, playing in the backyard, or to places not frequented by many other dogs will allow for exercise, but keep Benny calm 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. Benny 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 Benny to be successful in your home. We’re available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Benny, 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!