



Vienna Bread 336089: What to Expect

Vienna Bread is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Vienna Bread is a reserved Great Pyrenees who enjoys casual sniffy walks, playing with his dog friends, and running around in the yard. Vienna came to OHS through our Humane Law Department; his former owner struggling to care for the number of dogs they had on their rural property. While it was in Vienna's best interest to be removed from this property, that wide open space had been all he had known for his whole life. Prior to coming to OHS Vienna had never worn a collar, walked on leash, or lived indoors. Coming to Portland and suddenly being inside a shelter environment, was very overwhelming for him. This caused Vienna to shut down, refusing to walk inside and plant himself on the ground when he felt overwhelmed.

Working with him in the Behavior Modification program, we've been able to provide Vienna with structure and predictability, allowing him to try new and intimidating things in a way that feels manageable. Using both positive reinforcement based training methods and setting up situations in which Vienna can try new and intimidating things in a manageable way, like walking on new flooring, he's had fantastic success! Future adopters will need to be ready to acknowledge his default anxious behavior but feel comfortable continuing his progression of skills. He is learning the comforts of living in an indoor world and things we have adjusted to will be brand new experiences for him, such as noise from the television, riding in a car, sight and sound of the vacuum, walking through doorways, and the various texture of flooring throughout a home.

Great Pyrenees were bred as livestock guardian dogs, keeping their charges safe from predators like wolves and coyotes, patrolling property and alert barking at the first signs of trouble. This behavior is incredibly genetic, and Vienna will bark to alert to changes in his environment, and in more urban settings, this could be someone walking in front of your windows or doors or a dog walking across the street while he's in the yard. Adopters will need to be mindful of this behavior to ensure he is kept safe and comfortable. We expect that Vienna 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 Vienna Bread settle in during your first months together:

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. Explain that Vienna Bread is not comfortable with people and doesn't enjoy meeting strangers while on their walk.

Don't take Vienna Bread 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.).

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

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

Supervise your dog outside and take them out on a leash. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Vienna out alone. They are easily frightened and could dig a hole under your fence or slip through a gap! 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.

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

When you have people over, **it's okay to put Vienna in another room.** If you'd like Vienna to meet a guest, put them on a leash and give them time to adjust before allowing your guest to pet. Let it be Vienna's choice to go to them for pets or hang back and watch. Crowding Vienna or forcing them to interact can make fearful behavior worse.

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

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

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