



Viktor 337926: What to Expect

Viktor is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Viktor is a super sweet albeit nervous little cattle dog puppy! He loves playing with toys and romping with his puppy pals in the yard and he's putting in the work on learning that people are cool too! Viktor was transferred to OHS with his mom and siblings through our Second Chance Program, so much of his history is unknown. This little family unit was terrified of this big transition into shelter life and Viktor would cower in the corner with his siblings, avoiding all the changes that they found so frightening. Moving Viktor down to the Behavior and Rescue Center allowed us to remove him from the overwhelming stimulation of the shelter and enrolling him in our Behavior Modification program has allowed us to introduce Viktor to new experiences in a much more manageable way. Viktor will need patient owners, without small children, who can continue to introduce him to the great big world, slowly, using the same positive reinforcement training we've found successful here at OHS.

Viktor is a shy and reserved puppy who likes to take things slow and enjoy the scenic route along the way. Prior to coming into the Behavior Modification program, Viktor had never walked on leash. We've been able to provide Viktor with structure and predictability, allowing him to try new and intimidating things, like walking on leash, in a way that feels manageable. While Viktor is still working on building up his own confidence, he finds it easier to try new things when he has a social dog friend to help show him the ropes. When he watches another dog say "hi" to a new person or can follow another dog when walking on leash, it often gives Viktor the confidence boost he needs to try it himself. Because of this, we believe he will do best in a home where there is another well-socialized adult dog to help show him the ropes. A pet meet is required prior to adoption to ensure dogs are a good match.

We expect that Viktor 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 Viktor 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 Viktor is not comfortable with people and doesn't enjoy meeting strangers while on their walk. Tossing a treat on the ground is more effective for your dog to make positive associations with new people.

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

Use routine to get Viktor comfortable in their new home. It will take a couple weeks for Viktor 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 Viktor's training will create a bond and a form of communication between two species who don't understand each other. The more positive experiences Viktor has with his owners, the more valuable you will become in high distracting situations

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

"Puppy proof" your home and practice tether training to prevent them from getting into puppy/adolescent trouble. When home have Viktor 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 Viktor 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 Viktor 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. Viktor 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/>).

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