



Sasha 343792: What to Expect

Sasha is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Sasha is an active, playful, and ready to work adolescent dog. She is always ready for adventure and would make a great companion for an active family who likes to get up and go, is experienced or interested in dog sports, or loves training dogs. Sasha loves to learn new things and during her time working with our Behavior Modification team, Sasha is already making outstanding progress with her manners. She already knows how to sit, lay down, stay, leave it, drop it, and come when called and would love to continue her training journey using the same positive reinforcement techniques we use here at OH with her new family! She loves all people she meets and has never met a stranger. Due to her exuberance for life and lack of body awareness, we feel she would do best in a home without small children that she could easily knock over, jump on, or steal things from their hands like food or toys.

Sasha's heart is bursting with love, excitement, and curiosity, sometimes to the point it overflows into overstimulated behavior such as barking, chasing her tail, and grabbing onto loose fitting clothes, the leash, or bags. She's made great progress while at OH but will need continued support learning how to regulate her emotions. She will need appropriate outlets for her energy and continued training, so she grows into a well balanced adult dog. Sasha is so excited at seeing and possibly meeting other dogs, it spills into frustration that she can't run up to say hello. We've been working on having her focus and engage with her handler and waiting for permission before saying hello or playing with another dog. While Sasha has shown us she's dog social, her initial meetings can be intense with barking, pulling, tail chasing, and hyper focus on the other dog. This can be considered rude to other dogs and overwhelming for calmer, older, or less social dogs. It's important her owners never allow Sasha to greet other dogs on leash when displaying these behaviors as it can reinforce those frustrated feelings. Continuing on with your walk and encouraging engagement will help keep Sasha's emotion appropriately placed.

On a car ride, Sasha became overstimulated and reactive to the cars around her. While sitting in one person's lap in the passenger seat she lunged to bark at a passing car and in that situation ended up biting the driver of the car drawing blood. While not an intentional bite, but more a misdirection of frustration, her future owners will need to practice car riding etiquette like crating while driving or using a seatbelt while in the back of the car to keep her calm and focused.

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

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

Sasha needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Sasha 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 Sasha settle on a mat 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 Sasha 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.

Don't take Sasha 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.).

“Puppy proof” your home and practice tether training to prevent them from getting into puppy/adolescent trouble. When home have Sasha 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 Sasha drag the leash around the house or yard from time to time to simulate “freedom”, but do not let them off leash until he can 100% be trusted not to get into things they shouldn’t. This could take up to a few weeks. Crate them 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. Sasha 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.” Sasha 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.

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. Distance is calming.

Let them drag a leash attached to their collar for the first week or two inside and outside the home. If Sasha gets into puppy trouble, pick up the leash and direct her to making the best decisions rather than yelling or grabbing.

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

Visiting the Vet: Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Sasha does very well at the vet, with patience 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.

We’re here to help!

We want Sasha to be successful in your home. We’re available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Sasha, 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!

Behavioral Medication for your new dog

This dog has been prescribed one or more medications to help reduce anxiety and impulsivity during their time in the shelter. You may be provided with a supply of this dog’s medication(s) along with specific dosing instructions at the time of adoption. We would recommend that you continue giving this medication for at least the first 6 months after adoption to help reduce stress that may be associated with this dog making a smooth transition into your home. In order to avoid any adverse side effects (including behavioral and systemic) please do not abruptly stop administering these medications or discontinue use without consulting your veterinarian. When it appears time to stop giving your dog these medications, please contact your veterinarian for an appropriate protocol to make sure you have enough medication to allow for a gradual weaning off process. Please do not substitute other supplements or medications (including your own prescriptions) without consulting a veterinary professional.

During this process, please watch for any signs of worsening fear or anxiety. If the dog appears to be getting worse during the weaning off process, contact your veterinarian as longer treatment or a different combination of medications may be needed. Remember that successful behavioral rehabilitation often relies on a combination of pharmaceutical therapy as well as various training modalities.