



Rue 345198: What to Expect

Rue is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Rue is the ultimate pocket sized PNW adventure buddy! She loves her walks, playing with her toys, and learning new things with her handlers. Don't let her short legs fool you; Rue is ready to go go go! Rue entered the shelter system after her energy levels made her a mismatch for her previous family with young children. This energy combined with her herding dog instincts lead her to herding children and nipping at heels, even breaking skin during one instance. Upon arrival into OH, Rue found herself struggling with the unpredictability and hustle and bustle of shelter life, causing her to react to new people and stimuli with barking and snapping teeth. Moving Rue into the Behavior Modification program has given us the ability to help Rue learn alternate behaviors when she feels overwhelmed, like checking in with her handlers and moving away from a trigger that's making her uncomfortable. Rue will need a quiet and predictable home with adopters that are ready to continue her training with the same positive reinforcement-based training methods we've found success with here at OH. Her future home will need to be free of young children, but respectful and dog savvy teenagers could be a lot of fun for Rue!

While Rue is a very affectionate and sweet gal, she can find being overhanded or suddenly grabbed overwhelming. Rue will attempt to dart away, or if other attempts of communication are ignored, she will flash teeth and snap at hands to release her. During her time in BMod we've worked to introduce routine handling in predictable and positive ways, building trust with Rue so she knows what to expect during these moments. Future adopters will need to be ready to advocate for Rue during future vet and grooming visits, and able to continue getting her comfortable with these forms of handling. Rue can also be uncomfortable with strange people bending over in an attempt to pet. She can become stiff, stare, and snap if pressured further to interact. With thoughtful introductions Rue has made many friends and once you're in the social circle, she never forgets. Her owners will need to advocate for her space while out in public.

During her time in the shelter, we've had the opportunity to introduce Rue to other dogs to gauge her interest in social interactions. Rue tends to charge into social situations with a rowdy play style, which can easily overwhelm other dogs. Uncontrolled social situations like the dog park or doggy daycare would not be a great fit for Rue, and she'd rather enjoy Sniffspots or playdates with known dogs that can appreciate her energy. A pet meet is required to ensure compatibility between Rue and other resident dogs.

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

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 Rue 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. Distance is calming.

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!

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

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

Rue needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Rue 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.

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