



Tadpole 352915: What to Expect

Tadpole is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Tadpole is an affectionate, gloriously fluffy little long-haired gentleman who would love nothing more than to curl up in your lap and become your soft, sweet sidekick for life. He can be nervous at first, but with time and patience, he warms quickly and can often be found jumping up on his favorite people for pets, happily following them on casual walks, or falling asleep snuggled up on a sofa next to them.

Tadpole came to Oregon Humane through our Second Chance Program, so unfortunately, much of his history is a mystery. The busy environment of the main shelter quickly proved to be a little too much for this sensitive guy, so to give him the space he needed to decompress and settle in, we moved Tadpole into our Behavior Modification program. Here, he's had a quieter environment where he could adjust to shelter life, work on some important doggie skills, and he has made tremendous progress! He's discovered that people can be pretty wonderful (especially when they come bearing delicious cheese), learned to walk on leash, and gained confidence exploring new places. We've loved watching him come out of his shell and realize that the world might not be quite as scary as he first thought. Because he can still become overwhelmed by busy environments, we think he'll be happiest in a quiet, low-traffic home without small children, and a peaceful neighborhood away from the hustle and bustle of downtown or busy streets would be right up his alley.

Tadpole also finds comfort and confidence in the company of other well-socialized dogs. A resident dog is not required, but he may enjoy having a canine companion who can help him feel more secure and show him the ropes of pet dog life. A pet meet with any resident dog will be required before adoption to make sure everyone is a good match. With patience, consistency, and a calm environment, we believe Tadpole has the potential to continue blossoming into the affectionate, happy dog we know he can be.

Here's how to help Tadpole 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 towards 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 Tadpole 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!

Allow for time to build trust. Always let Tadpole decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Tadpole 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.

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Tadpole out alone. They are small and could easily hide under your deck or a bush - or slip through a gap in your fence! 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.

Wait to take walks. Tadpole will need time to bond with you before you start taking them for walks. Give them a couple of weeks to get to know you and their new home, then practice walking around your yard before trying a walk around the block. Tadpole will do best walking alongside a confident canine companion. They're already doing a great job of checking in with their human at the other end of the leash – continue encouraging this behavior to help strengthen the bond by offering treats.

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

Take Tadpole outside on leash. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Tadpole out alone. They are so small, that they could easily hide under your deck or a bush - or slip through a gap in your fence! Tadpole does like to go for walks and go outside to potty but needs some time to figure out the routine before being trusted off leash.

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

We expect that Tadpole 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!**

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

