



Yarrow 354851: What to Expect

Yarrow is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Yarrow is a very sweet and sensitive gal learning how to navigate the world! Once she warms up and lets you into her close friend circle, she loves snuggling on the couch, crawling into your lap, and taking easy going sniffy walks. Upon arrival into the shelter, Yarrow found herself incredibly overwhelmed with the hustle and bustle and struggled to adapt to this big change. She would avoid handlers, tremble in fear, and freeze in place to avoid any conflict. Bringing Yarrow into the Behavior Modification program here at OH has allowed us to provide a calm environment along with intentional positive interactions with new people. At her own pace, Yarrow has started to open up to her handlers and show off her silly puppy personality as she feels more comfortable. As Yarrow becomes more comfortable, more natural and curious dog behaviors such as sniffing, chewing on novel objects, and jumping on her handlers for attention becomes more apparent. She'll need a quiet, low traffic home with patient and understanding adopters that are ready to give her the time and space she'll need to settle into her new home and continue working with Yarrow with the same positive reinforcement-based training methods we've had success with at OH. We expect that Yarrow 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!**

During her time in the shelter, we've introduced Yarrow to multiple other dogs to gauge her interest in social interactions. Yarrow is a very insecure young dog, and while curious about other dogs, she is easily overwhelmed. She will either create space for herself by moving away from other dogs, or by showing her teeth and charging towards other dogs to make that space herself if her other signals have been ignored. As Yarrow becomes more comfortable and attached to her handlers, sharing the attention that her human friends get from other dogs can make Yarrow insecure as well, causing her to shove herself between other dogs and her handlers, as a very mild form of resource guarding. Yarrow will do best in a home where she can be someone's one and only dog, and adopters that can continue to give her neutral and positive interactions around other dogs at a safe and comfortable distance.

Here's how to help Yarrow 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 Yarrow 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 Yarrow decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Yarrow decide that they enjoy spending time with you by coming closer for pets and jumping next to you on the couch.

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Yarrow 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.

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

Take Yarrow outside on leash. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Yarrow 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! Yarrow 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 Yarrow in another room.** If you'd like Yarrow to meet a guest, put them on a leash and give them time to adjust before allowing your guest to pet. Let it be Yarrow's choice to go to them for pets or hang back and watch. Crowding Yarrow or forcing them to interact can make fearful behavior worse.

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.

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.

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