Acadia 358787: What to Expect

Acadia is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Acadia is a playful and curious pup who would love to get up and go adventure with you. She can be cautious and nervous at first with new people and environments, but with treats, some baby talk, and a trusted pal she adjusts rather quickly. When comfortable she is playful with toys, dogs, and sticks while out in a yard or on walks. When uncomfortable she will choose to avoid situations and move away from what is making her nervous. If pressured into situations she's uncomfortable with she will freeze, buck, growl, and snap in an attempt to create space. Her new family will find success using the same positive reinforcement techniques we've found successful using here at OH. Due to her shy disposition we feel she would do best in a home with calm older children who have experience around dogs.

Acadia enjoys romping around with other social and confident dogs and would enjoy a home with a playful resident dog or a home with frequent play dates with dog friends. Having a confident canine companion can help model behavior for Acadia as she learns how to adjust to her new environment and trust the people within it. She would also enjoy soaking all the attention to herself. A pet meet is required before adoption to ensure personality compatibility.

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

We expect that Acadia 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!**

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.

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 Acadia 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 Acadia 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.

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 Acadia 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.

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

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

Don't take Acadia 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.).

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 Acadia decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Acadia 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 Acadia 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 Acadia before introducing them to someone new. They may need to meet a new person multiple times before feeling comfortable with strangers. Treats and allowing Acadia to approach as they feel comfortable will be best. New people should just completely ignore Acadia at first – playing hard to get is the way to their heart.

Acadia needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Acadia 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.

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