



Otis: What to Expect

Otis is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Otis is a smart dog who loves to play fetch! Otis needs to find a dog experienced, adult-only home with a patient person who has time to continue working on training using the same positive reinforcement techniques we use at OHS. He would not do well in a busy neighborhood, a home with a lot of hustle and bustle, or one with children. Otis also needs a home with a securely fenced yard where he can play frisbee with you and needs to be the only pet in your home.

Otis will need your help with potty training. He does best when he can stick to a routine and has a predictable schedule. You may need to take him out every couple of hours until he gets the hang of going outside. Be prepared for accidents, especially as he settles in.

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

Let him drag a leash for a week or longer. It will take time for Otis to get comfortable with you and his new surroundings and even MORE time before he will be okay with you removing/replacing his leash.



Use treats to build trust. Pair treats with pets to help him develop a positive association with touch.

Designate a "safe spot" in your home. You can use an exercise pen to confine him to a smaller area where he has access to water, bed, crate with door propped open and toys (see picture). When you are unable to supervise him, leave him in his safe spot.

Practice home alone training. Otis may whine, bark, or try to escape if left home alone for extended periods of time. We've had success leaving him alone for over an hour using an automatic food dispenser to occasionally reward him for quiet, calm behavior. We've also been working on crate training. To continue crate training, start by feeding his meals in the crate and work your way up from there.

Otis needs daily exercise to reduce stress. You can practice training and "drop it" as you play fetch. He has learned if he drops the toy at your feet you will throw the ball for him again. He is very smart and wants to please, but needs some guidance.

Work on having him settle on a mat and gently praise him for lying down. If he gets up to pace, call him back and use a treat to lure him into a down again. If he is on leash, you can hold him with approx. 4 feet of leash and wait until he offers a settle by lying down. Softly praise and treat when he does this.

Skip the dog park! Don't take him to busy places where he will have lots of uncontrolled interactions with people or other dogs (such as Saturday Market, dog parks, coffee shops, etc.).

Limit introductions to new people. Take your time to get to know Otis before introducing him to someone new. Introduce people one at a time. Allow him to approach new people on his own terms. Have them offer him treats or go outside and toss the ball for him.

Practice "Leave it." Otis may bark and lunge if he sees people or other dogs when he's on a walk. When he sees a dog or stranger, **before** he starts barking, say "Otis, leave it." When he turns to look at you, reward with praise and a treat and walk away from the trigger. Distance is calming.

Ignore jumpy behavior. If Otis jumps on you, calmly and quietly, turn and ignore him. If you ignore the behavior and it continues (or if he starts to jump on someone else), immediately leave the room. If he is dragging a leash, calmly pick up the leash and walk him to his safe spot. A brief break may help him calm down. After a few minutes, give him a chance to try again.

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.

Patience will come in handy for you. Otis is a sensitive dog who responds best to positive reinforcement and reward-based training. He needs an understanding, calm owner who has the time and desire to work with him. He will pay you back by supplying love and enthusiasm!

We're here to help!

We want Otis to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Otis, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact Annika at **(503) 802-6713** or annikah@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!