



Desi 252732: What to Expect

Desi is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Desi is your typical Sheltie; she is energetic, vocal, and loves to play. She is comfortable around other dogs whether it's a play date with a friendly dog or snoozing in the house on a lazy day. Currently Desi is overweight and on a strict diet and exercise plan to get her back to a healthy weight, which will help extend her life into healthy happy senior years. She needs help from her new owners to get into an appropriate exercise routine and keep the treats to a minimum. Desi has successfully lived with other dogs and cats in a previous home, but she would do best in a home with dog savvy cats. When excited Desi likes to bark and herd, which is natural and normal for her breed. She has never bitten a person, but in a previous home she has routinely knocked down toddlers in her excitement. She would do best in a home with older children who are dog wise.

Desi is entering senior dog territory (starting at 7 years old) and requires a dental appointment for a cleaning and possible extraction of her teeth. This is a normal routine cleaning all dogs should receive around 5 years old. Due to the design of the Sheltie's long face, Desi sometimes gets some crusty eye boogers that will need frequent cleaning from her owner(s). She is comfortable with grooming in all aspects including brushing, bathing, blow dry, and eye gunk cleanings. To keep a healthy coat free of mats, brushing everyday will be required for her total welfare.

Desi is a happy excitable dog who sometimes barks at the sight of other dogs or people while she's out for a walk in her neighborhood or when they come to the door. During her time at OHS we've been working on her comfort with this by using positive reinforcement techniques that counter condition her excitement in these moments, to quiet observation. We've been successful on walks using a slip lead collar or a head halter to help guide her into appropriate interactions while on walks, like not jumping on people when she says hello or pulling hard towards other dogs.

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

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

Desi needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Desi loves to run around a yard, take 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.

If you're having people over, put Desi on leash so they learn to not dart out the front door or jump all over people. Once everyone is sitting down and calm you can drop the leash and allow your dog to decide if they want to go say hi to your guests. Ensure your guests ask Desi to sit before being pet so they're rewarded for keeping 4 feet on the floor.

Take a training class. Desi 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/>).

Walk Desi on an appropriate walking tool. We have been using a special head halter, called a transitional leash, to help guide Desi to walk nicely on leash with little to no pulling. When Desi sees other dogs on walks, they become incredibly excited and then frustrated that they cannot run up to say hello and play, causing them to jump, pull, whine, or bark. It will be important to never let Desi run up to other dogs on leash as that can reinforce their frustrations.

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

Don't take Desi 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.). Wait until you've built a bond of trust and a solid foundation of training expectations in those busy environments.

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

Visiting the Vet: Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Desi does very well at the vet, they handle meeting new being well. The vet can still be a scary place. Bringing tasty treats like cheese and/or hot dogs can help make the experience more pleasant.

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