



Phyllis 296542: What to Expect

Phyllis is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Phyllis is an adorable and fun-loving house hippo! She loves going for walks, playing with her dog friends, and is motivated to learn new things! Phyllis wants nothing more than to be your friend, and your friend's friend. She has a lot of zest for life, and with all that enthusiasm, Phyllis can struggle to settle down when she is not the center of attention. This can look like pacing, barking, or whining when left alone. Phyllis' excitement for life can also lead to her jumping up on people, and if overstimulated more, she may grab onto things such as the leash, loose fitting clothing, or bags/purses. We've been successful teaching Phyllis to sit and wait before petting, leashing, and greeting new friends. She will need dedicated, patient owners, who will continue her training using the same positive reinforcement techniques we use here at OHS to continue her success long term. Because of this, we believe she will do best in a home without small children as she could knock over or steal toys or food from them.

Prior to coming to OHS, Phyllis had not experienced living inside, and we believe it will be an adjustment for Phyllis to learn to be an "indoor" pet dog. She does not yet understand what an appropriate dog toy or food is; counter surfing, door darting, and barking are possible behaviors she could exhibit in her new home. She will need intentional training as she continues to learn the skills associated with indoor living, such as where is an appropriate potty spot, what are appropriate toys for dogs, and what things are for humans and what are for dogs. During her time with at OHS, we've been successful bringing her into office spaces or "Real-Life Rooms" and showing her what is appropriate pet dog behavior in these spaces, such as laying down on dog beds, chewing on dog toys, and introduced her to crate training.

While Phyllis loves to play with dogs, typical of her breed, she tends to be stiff when excitedly rushing in to greet other dogs, and this is not always well received by other dogs. She is a dog who gives mixed signals and can come off awkwardly to other dogs, so while Phyllis is comfortable with most dogs, some dogs aren't comfortable with Phyllis. We don't think she would be a good candidate for the dog park, due to the chances of miscommunication between dogs. Instead, she would be better suited for playing one on one with known dogs, like a friend's dog in a backyard or SniffSpot. Because of Phyllis' tendency to rush to interactions, she will not do well in a home with cats or small animals.

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

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

If you're having people over, put Phyllis 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 Phyllis to sit before being pet so they're rewarded for keeping 4 feet on the floor.

Phyllis needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Phyllis 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.

Work on having Phyllis settle on a mat and gently praise them for lying down. If they get up to pace, call them back and use a treat to lure them into a down again. If Phyllis is on leash, you can hold them with approximately 4 feet of leash and wait until they offer a settle by lying down. Softly praise and treat when they do this.

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.

Skip the dog park. Don't take Phyllis to busy places where they will have lots of uncontrolled interactions with people or other dogs (such as Saturday Market, dog parks, coffee shops, etc.). Leashed hikes to the river, playing in the backyard, or to places not frequented by many other dogs will allow for exercise, but keep Phyllis calm and engaged with you.

"Puppy proof" your home and practice tether training to prevent them from getting into puppy/adolescent trouble. When home have Phyllis 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 Phyllis 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 Phyllis 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.

Walk Phyllis on an appropriate walking tool. We have been using a special head halter, called a transitional leash, to help guide Phyllis to walk nicely on leash with little to no pulling. When Phyllis 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, and bark. It will be important to never let Phyllis run up to other dogs on leash as that can reinforce their frustrations.

Take a training class. Phyllis 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 is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Phyllis 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 Phyllis to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Phyllis, 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!