



Sullivan 307845: What to Expect

Sullivan is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Sullivan is an active dog who loves going for walks, playing tug-o-war, and romping around the yard! When comfortable Sullivan loves to play, sit in your lap, and go for walks. Much of Sullivan's history is a mystery, prior to coming to OHS, Sullivan was found wandering around as a stray, where he was cornered, grabbed, and then picked up. During this frightening interaction Sullivan did react by biting and breaking skin on the handler. It takes Sullivan some time and patience to warm up to new people and places, but once he does, he will happily follow you around and enthusiastically jump into your lap for snuggles. However, if pushed too quickly or his requests for space are ignored, he could escalate to growling, snapping, or biting to create space for himself. He will need patient owners and a calm environment, without young children, to continue his training progress in the home. Slow and steady will win the race with Sullivan!

During Sullivan's time at OHS, he has shown that he doesn't enjoy interacting or sharing small spaces with other dogs. When another dog gets close to Sullivan, he feels the need to offensively defend himself through barking, growling, and lunging. Because of this, he is not a good match for uncontrolled settings like dog parks or daycares. While he's able to coexist in larger spaces with other dogs, such as on a walk in a neighborhood, we believe he will do best as the only pet in the home, soaking up all the love and attention for himself.

Sullivan is a breed of dog that will need consistent grooming in order to prevent painful matting and tangles. While Sullivan settles in and learns to accept handling from new people, keeping his coat short will be the best option to prevent any uncomfortable matting or tangling. Allowing his coat to grow too long can lead to an inability to see, discomfort + lesions where the hair is matting, and an inability to defecate. Owners will likely need to partner with their veterinarian for calming medication and a groomer who is comfortable and skilled in handling a fearful dog such as Sullivan. Grooming visits will need to be scheduled every 6-8 weeks to maintain a healthy short coat and low stress grooming experience for the rest of his life.

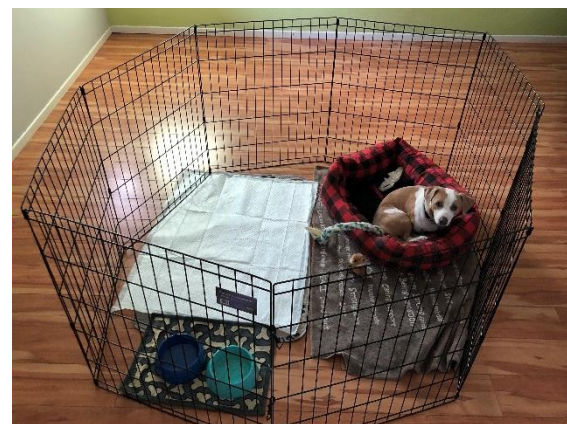
We expect that Sullivan will be overwhelmed by everything they encounter at first. During the critical first months in a new home, their safety will depend on your good judgment and forethought. **A frightened dog will look for any occasion to bolt when startled: out of vehicles, out the front door, or slipping out of the leash. Keep a very tight grip of that leash!**

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

Use an exercise pen to confine Sullivan to a small area when you are not home or able to supervise them (see picture). Give them a bed, water, favorite toy, and a potty pad. This "safe spot" will also be a great place to put them when you have visitors to your home, so they don't have to worry about interacting with everyone if they're not comfortable.

Allow for time to build trust. Always let Sullivan decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Sullivan decide that they enjoy spending time with you by coming closer for pets, jumping next to you on the couch, and playing with toys.

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 Sullivan 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.



Sullivan's "safe spot" when no one is home.

Sullivan needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Sullivan 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.

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!

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Sullivan 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 walks and go outside to potty but need some time to build confidence with you before going on longer excursions.

Wait to take walks. Sullivan will need time to bond with you before you start taking them for walks. Give them a week to get to know you and their new home, then practice walking around your yard before trying a walk around the block. They're already doing a great job of checking in with their human at the other end of the leash – continue encouraging this behavior to help strengthen the bond by offering treats.

Don't take Sullivan 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.).

Use treats and toys to build trust. Maintaining and continuing Sullivan's training will create a bond and a form of communication between two species who don't understand each other. The more positive experiences Sullivan has with their owners, the more valuable you will become in high distracting situations.

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

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 Sullivan to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Sullivan, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact us at **(503) 285-7722 ex 422** 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!