



Elliot 306619: What to Expect

Elliot is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Elliot is a very sweet boy with a sensitive nature. As far as huskies go, he is a far cry from the breed typical personality traits. Elliot loves other dogs, of any size and temperament, and would do best in a home with another confident social dog to take cues from. He can be wary of people at first, choosing to observe rather than investigate, but once he learns you're a friend he will follow you around like a little duckling and sit at your feet. Elliot is quiet, calm, and once comfortable with you loves being pet and brushed and would do best in a home where he would not be pressured into situations, he's uncomfortable with. But rather a home where his owners will use the same positive reinforcement techniques we've been successful using here at OHS.

Elliot was found injured as a stray and it was determined he most likely had been hit by a car. He was tended at Dove Lewis and Bonnie Hays before being transferred to OHS to receive care and placement. During his time at OHS we've observed Elliot is a sensitive guy and the busy environment of the shelter was fairly distressing to him. He found the most comfort in having a fellow canine kennel companion to hang out with. He was eventually moved to our behavior center where he could find consistency in care, familiar faces, and dedicated professional training. We've determined Elliot needs a quiet low traffic home with a confident resident dog and no small children. The fast and unpredictable movements of small children would startle Elliot, but pre-teens or teenagers would enjoy Elliot's calm disposition. We expect that Elliot 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 Elliot settle in during your first months together:

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 toward leaving them alone, unsecured, once they've had the chance to settle into your home and you know with certainty, they will be comfortable.

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 Elliot is not comfortable with strange 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.

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 Elliot decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Elliot 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.

Limit introductions to new people. Take your time to get to know Elliot before introducing them to someone new. They may need to meet a new person multiple times before feeling comfortable with strangers. Treats and allowing Elliot to approach as they feel comfortable will be best. New people should just completely ignore Elliot at first – playing hard to get is the way to their heart.

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

When you have people over, **it's okay to put Elliot in another room.** If you'd like Elliot to meet a guest, put them on a leash and give them time to adjust before allowing your guest to pet. Let it be Elliot's choice to go to them for pets or hang back and watch. Crowding Elliot or forcing them to interact can make fearful behavior worse.

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

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

Don't take Elliot 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.).

Visiting the Vet: Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Elliot does very well at the vet. 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 Elliot to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Elliot, 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!