



## Ham 305750: What to Expect

Ham, is a playful and affectionate dog who enjoys showing off his tricks like sit, down, shake, and paw. His love for toys and cuddles makes him an endearing companion, and his joy in engaging with his favorite people is heartwarming.

However, Ham does have some challenges. He displays resource guarding behaviors, with toys, and has a history of barrier reactivity which has resulted in a bite incident. He can become anxious when people try to take objects away from him and may react with low growling.

We have been working with Ham on positive reinforcement training techniques, such as trading toys for high-value treats like cheese, to reduce his resource guarding. We've also implemented management strategies to prevent situations where his barrier reactivity could be triggered. Potential adopters will need to continue these practices, ensuring a calm and structured environment for Ham. By maintaining consistency with these strategies, Ham's new family can help him feel secure while reinforcing positive behaviors in his new home

### **Here's how to help Ham settle in during your first months together:**

**Designate a "safe spot" in your home allowing Ham to comfortably chew on his items.** You can use a crate or taller baby gates to confine him to a smaller area where he will 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.

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

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

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

**Work on having Ham 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 Ham 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.

**Remember to keep doors and gates secured and locked.** If Ham were to get loose in the neighborhood there is a possibility they could likely run up to any person/dog to excitedly greet them, but if they encountered another person/animal, Ham and their target could end up in a dangerous situation. It will be up to you to be mindful and cautious of opening doors and gates that lead into the neighborhood.

**Practice "Leave it."** Ham would benefit from a continuation in training "Leave-it" when passing by random items he may deem as valuable in the home. When they turn to look at you, reward with praise and a treat and walk away from the item. Distance is calming.

**Take a training class.** Ham 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's an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet.

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 Ham to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Ham, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact Certified Dog Trainer Skylar Morelos @ [skylar.morelos@oregonhumane.org](mailto:skylar.morelos@oregonhumane.org). Or visit <https://www.oregonhumane.org/resources/> for additional resources.

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!