



Margo 288690: What to Expect

Margo is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Margo is a sweet, goofy dog that absolutely adores her human friends! She's a big fan of long, chill, sniffy walks, sunbathing, and loves playing in water. In a previous home, Margo was noted to have some fear and anxiety directed towards new people, more so with males. This came to a head when Margo nipped at a contractor in the home as he reached for something on the ground near Margo, resulting in a bite. When Margo is uncomfortable or in pain, such as when approached by someone she does not know or during vet type handling from strangers, she can snap in attempt to create space. During her time at OHS, we've been successful teaching Margo to accept new people into her social circle with the use of treats and taking things slow, and once she feels comfortable, she will adorably solicit lots of cuddles and affection. When Margo trusts her handlers, she will allow them to handle her all over, for vet exams or physical therapy. She currently has about 20 individuals who work closely with her, and this circle of trust grows every day. Her future adopters will get hands on training prior to adoption to help ensure everyone's success before going home. We believe Margo will do best in a low traffic home and neighborhood, and a home without children or frequent visitors. It's best to start with a small circle of trust and slowly expand as you all begin to understand each other.

During Margo's time at OHS, we've introduced her to a variety of dogs and have experienced conflicted interactions. She's mainly shown us that she's not 100% comfortable sharing personal space with other dogs. Margo is comfortable coexisting in larger spaces with dogs, like walking past dogs across the street or around the park. She is not comfortable with dogs running up to her and owners will need to advocate for her space while out in public. We've been successful teaching her to "leave it" if she becomes too focused on people or dogs during a walk. When dogs approach Margo, such as when she's on leash or through a barrier like a fence, she feels uncomfortable, and will bark, growl, and jump. Because of this, she is not a good match for uncontrolled settings like dog parks or daycares and will find these situations overwhelming. Instead, she wants to be your one and only pet, soaking up all the love and attention for herself. In return she'll pay you back with love and enthusiasm!

Immediately after Margo was surrendered to OHS, we noticed that she had an abnormal gait; a trip to the vet and she was diagnosed with bilateral hip dysplasia, she then received a femoral head ostectomy (FHO) on one hip. She is cleared to resume normal dog activities, but adopters should be prepared to keep her safe from future injury. She still walks funny, has limited mobility, and needs daily medication to help alleviate pain for the rest of her life. This also means, she will need to visit the vet every 6 months to test her blood to ensure she's handling her pain medication well. Surgery on her other hip can happen at any time, but she currently lives as normal a life as she can. It is likely, that further down the line, 3-5 years from now, she could need another surgery on her other hip. Our veterinary staff will sit down and chat with you about her surgery and medical needs before adoption. She needs to find a home with someone who can continue her training and rehabilitation using the same techniques we have found successful at OHS.

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

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 Margo 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.

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

Practice "Leave it." Margo may bark and lunge if they see other dogs out on a walk. When a dog is sighted, **before** they start barking, say "leave it." When they turn to look at you, reward with praise and a treat and walk away from the trigger. Distance is calming.

Continue muzzle training. Margo has been working on muzzle training as a management tool should they need to be in a space, like the vet's office, where they could meet other dogs/people. Maintaining this training will help their comfort in the muzzle and reduces the stress for all parties should an accidental encounter with dogs/people occur.

Skip the dog park. Don't take Magro 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.). Magro has shown us they don't have an interest in being around other dogs/people. Taking leashed short hikes to the river, playing in the backyard, or to places not frequented by many other dogs will allow for exercise, but keep Magro calm and engaged with you.

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

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

Work on having Margo settle on a mat, dog bed, or cot 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 Margo 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.

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

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.

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

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.

Behavioral Medication for your new dog

This dog has been prescribed one or more medications to help reduce anxiety and impulsivity during their time in the shelter. You may be provided with a supply of this dog's medication(s) along with specific dosing instructions at the time of adoption. We would recommend that you continue giving this medication for at least the first 6 months after adoption to help reduce stress that may be associated with this dog making a smooth transition into your home. In order to avoid any adverse side effects (including behavioral and systemic) please do not abruptly stop administering these medications or

discontinue use without consulting your veterinarian. When it appears time to stop giving your dog these medications, please contact your veterinarian for an appropriate protocol to make sure you have enough medication to allow for a gradual weaning off process. Please do not substitute other supplements or medications (including your own prescriptions) without consulting a veterinary professional.

During this process, please watch for any signs of worsening fear or anxiety. If the dog appears to be getting worse during the weaning off process, contact your veterinarian as longer treatment or a different combination of medications may be needed. Remember that successful behavioral rehabilitation often relies on a combination of pharmaceutical therapy as well as various training modalities.

We're here to help!

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