



Sailor 307179: What to Expect

Sailor is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Sailor is a fun and active little guy! He loves going for long walks and romping in the yard! It can take Sailor some time and patience to warm up to new people, but soon he'll be paying you back with lots of love and enthusiasm. When uncomfortable, Sailor will do his best to move away from what scares him, but if handlers continue to push him, he could escalate to growling or snapping in fear to create space for himself. In a previous foster home, when Sailor was meeting someone new, he was avoiding the new person to communicate his discomfort. Despite Sailor's clear communication, he was picked up and placed into the new person's lap; Sailor was frightened and as he was placed into their lap, he snapped at them, resulting in a bite. He has also snapped when over handled in an attempt to put on a harness by the foster parent's teenager. We've been successful introducing Sailor to new people slowly and with the use of something he likes such as, treats or going for a walk. When comfortable, Sailor will jump in your lap, lean in for pets, and become playful. While Sailor does like to be pet (after he gets to know you) and play with people, he's not an overly cuddly or affectionate dog, instead, he much prefers to do activities alongside you. He will need a patient owner who doesn't rush him and can calmly continue to help him learn new things. An owner who can advocate for his space when meeting new people using the same positive reinforcement-based techniques we use here at OHS will help build his confidence. We believe he will do best in a low traffic home and quiet neighborhood, and one without children, as loud noises and fast movements frighten him.

During his time at OHS, Sailor has had conflicting interactions with dogs and mainly found other dogs to be overwhelming and frightening. Due to his size and a previous history of constantly having his boundaries ignored, Sailor communicates his discomfort very outwardly. By being loud with his barking and very visually uncomfortable with lunging, he can put out a clear signal that he does not want to interact with other dogs, and this has less of a chance of being ignored by both dogs and handlers. Sailor will need to be the only pet in his future home, with an adopter that's able and willing to advocate for him and his space away from other dogs.

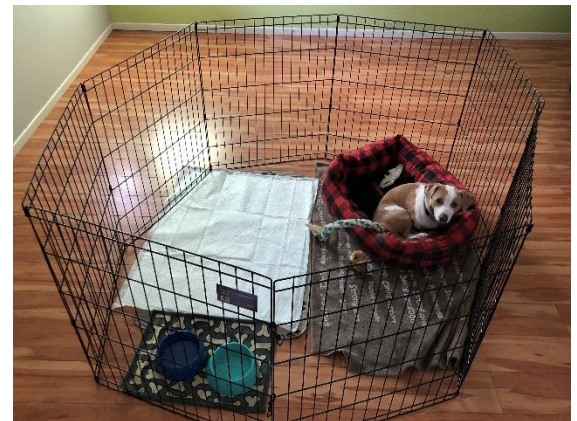
We expect that Sailor will be overwhelmed by everything they encounter at first. During the critical first months in a new home, their safety will depend on your good judgment and forethought. **A frightened dog will look for any occasion to bolt when startled: out of vehicles, out the front door, or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

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

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

Use an exercise pen to confine Sailor 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.

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



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

Allow for time to build trust. Always let Sailor decide if they want to come closer to you. Don't force interactions. As they grow more comfortable, you will see Sailor 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.

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 Sailor 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.

Don't take Sailor 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.).

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

Sailor needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Sailor 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.

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Sailor 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 short walks and go outside to potty but need some time to build confidence to go on longer excursions in even the quietest of neighborhoods.

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