



Brezel 313671: What to Expect

Brezel is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Brezel is a super sweet, albeit nervous, German Shepherd puppy! She's a goofy, gangly, puppy who loves going for walks, getting silly puppy zoomies in the yard, and is motivated to learn new things. People who love German Shepherds or who are looking to get into the breed, would likely adore Brezel! Prior to coming to OHS, Brezel grew up in a house with her six litter mates and her parents. She was under socialized to the outside world and to other dogs, outside of her direct family. Lots of places and experiences are still new to Brezel and she has likely never walked on a leash before coming to OHS. She will need patient owners who can continue to introduce her to the world slowly, using the same positive reinforcement-based training we use here at OHS. With time, Brezel could make an excellent adventure companion, anything from hikes and runs to camping, and beach trips.

During her time at OHS, Brezel has shown that she has mixed feelings about other dogs. When on a leash or behind a barrier, such as a fence, she will often bark, which is very typical of the breed. However, with slow and controlled introductions to well socialized adult dogs, Brezel does like to play! Because of this, she would not be a good candidate for busy, uncontrolled settings like daycares or dog parks and will find these setting very overwhelming. Instead, she would be better suited for playdates with known dogs, such as friend's dog in a backyard or at a SniffSpot.

Brezel has made great strides during her time with us! But she is still a nervous dog, especially when encountering something new. We expect that Brezel 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 Brezel 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 Brezel is not comfortable with people and doesn't enjoy meeting strangers while on their walk.

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

Walk Brezel on an appropriate walking tool. We have been using a special head halter, called a transitional leash, to help guide Brezel to walk nicely on leash with little to no pulling. When Brezel 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 Brezel run up to other dogs on leash as that can reinforce their frustrations.

Practice "Leave it." Brezel 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.

Skip the dog park. Don't take Brezel 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.). Taking leashed hikes to the river, playing in the backyard, or to places not frequented by many other dogs will allow for exercise, but keep Brezel calm and engaged with you.

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 Brezel 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 Brezel 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 Brezel 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.

Take a training class. Brezel 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 is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Brezel 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 Brezel to be successful in your home. We’re available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Brezel, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact us at **(503) 285-1145** 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!