



Maddox 278144: What to Expect

Maddox is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Maddox is a big, loveable snuggle bug who wants to smooch you with his big squishy manatee lips. He adores his human companions, will lean in for hearty pets, and ultimately try to cuddle up in your lap and fall asleep. Maddox walks great on leash and is a member of OHS's running team. He'll be a fantastic adventure partner who would love hiking, camping, and exploring. He's looking for a home with someone that has dog experience and no other animals in their home. Maddox will thrive with someone that's dedicated to continued positive reinforcement-based training and giving him appropriate outlets for his energy. He will not do well in a home with a lot of hustle and bustle, or an apartment with tight spaces and corridors. While a fenced yard is not a requirement, he would do well in a home with a secure yard or immediate outdoor access. He is great with meeting new people and enjoys the company of people, but he might be overly excitable with young children.

Maddox has displayed varying levels of reactivity towards other dogs. In his previous home, he was mostly kept outside and would run the perimeter barking at any passersby, and if he was inside, Maddox was kept isolated and was never able to develop positive or neutral experiences around other dogs. Because of this lack of socialization during his formative learning periods, Maddox does not enjoy the company of other dogs and does not want them to get too close. When other dogs do come too close, he will react offensively. He will never be a dog that would want to go to a dog park or dog daycare. We can successfully walk Maddox on leash around the neighborhood and near other dogs. He has had multiple successful field trips to the park, is alert when other dogs are around, will stare and can get hyper-focused on them, but he can be easily asked to continue to walk along with you without any issue. With experienced handlers and people willing to work with him, he has shown great impulse control and trainability regarding this.

Maddox loves his human friends, and he will be the best addition to your D&D nights, dinner parties and/or movie nights. He will curl up nearby or take turns putting his adorable head in all your guests' laps to get head scratches. Maddox needs a confident person to continue to guide him in being the best boy, and he will in turn be your ride or die buddy for life!

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

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

Designate a "safe spot" in your home. You can use a crate or taller baby gates to confine him to a smaller area where he has access to water, bed, and toys. When you are unable to supervise him, leave him in his safe spot. Slowly work towards leaving him alone unsecured once he's had the chance to settle into your home and you know with certainty, he will be comfortable.

If you're having people over, put Maddox on leash so he learns to not dart out the front door or jump all over people. Once everyone is sitting down and calm you can drop the leash and allow him to decide if he wants to go say hi to your company, ensure your guests ask him to sit before being pet so he's rewarded for keeping 4 feet on the floor.

Be his 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 his body language and help him out of situations if he appears stressed (pulling, hyper-staring, jumping). Explain that Maddox is learning to ignore dogs, as he gets overtly worried at the sight of them. Maddox has been known to fixate and pull toward other dogs when on a walk and will need continued practice on learning to ignore other dogs, but he gets better every day.

Maddox needs daily exercise to reduce stress. Maddox loves to go for runs, walks, play fetch, and chase a flirt pole. Giving him a healthy outlet for some of his energy will help him settle during calm hours at home.

Walk Maddox on an appropriate walking tool. We have been using a special head halter, called a transitional leash, to help guide Maddox to walk nicely on leash with little to no pulling. When Maddox sees other dogs on walks, they become alert, stressed, and may pull. It will be important to never let Maddox run up to other dogs on leash as that can reinforce their frustrations.

Practice "Leave it." Maddox may hyperfocus stare and stiffen if he sees dogs when he's on a walk. When he sees dogs, **before** he starts fixating, say "leave it." When he turns 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 him to busy places where he will have lots of uncontrolled interactions with people or other dogs (such as Saturday Market, dog parks, coffee shops, etc.).

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

Remember to keep doors and gates secured and locked. If Maddox were to get loose in the neighborhood there is a possibility they could likely run up to any person to excitedly greet them, but if they encountered another dog/animal, Maddox 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.

Continue muzzle training. Maddox 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. Maintaining this training will help their comfort in the muzzle and reduces the stress for all parties should an accidental encounter with dogs occur.

Visiting the Vet: Unless it is an emergency, give your dog plenty of time to bond to you before taking them to your vet. Maddox does very well at the vet, they handle meeting new people well; however, the vet can still be a scary, stressful place because Maddox does not like to be in small areas with other dogs present (lobby, hallways, etc). Bringing tasty treats like cheese and/or hot dogs can help make the experience more pleasant and have Maddox in his muzzle in these situations.

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 Maddox to be successful in your home. We're available to answer questions via phone and email. During your first two months with Maddox, we can also set up a free one-on-one consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact Annika 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!