

Winifred 316532: What to Expect

Winifred is a graduate of our Behavior Modification Program and is looking for a special home. Winifred is a small little chihuahua who would love to curl up in your lap and take a little nap or go for a leisurely calm walk. Winifred was brought in as a stray, so her history is a mystery, but during her time in the shelter we've been able to glean into what makes her tick. Winifred is a small chihuahua who is easily frightened by overwhelming stimuli like new people crowding her, busy high traffic places, and large unknown dogs approaching her. When frightened she will growl, show teeth, and attempt to hide or get away. If pursued further, she could resort to snapping or biting in an attempt to create space. During her time at OHS we've been able to move her into a quiet space with dedicated trained staff to help her feel more comfortable coming out of her shell.

When comfortable Winifred will allow being picked up, will crawl into your lap for a nap, and enjoys the company of other well socialized dogs, especially those who are around the same size. It may take her some time before she's comfortable with a new person, but when taking it slow, she's more likely to feel comfortable long term. Her new family will need to advocate for her space. We believe she would do best in a home without small children in a low traffic quiet home away from the hustle and bustle of a busy downtown type of neighborhood. Winifred has met multiple dogs while at OHS and she seems to be the most comfortable with other confident and social dogs, especially those who are around the same size. If an overly excited large dog approaches her she will growl, cower, and show teeth and if pressed further could snap or attempt to bite. Her new family will need to advocate for her space to keep her safe and so she can continue to grow into a confident adult dog.

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

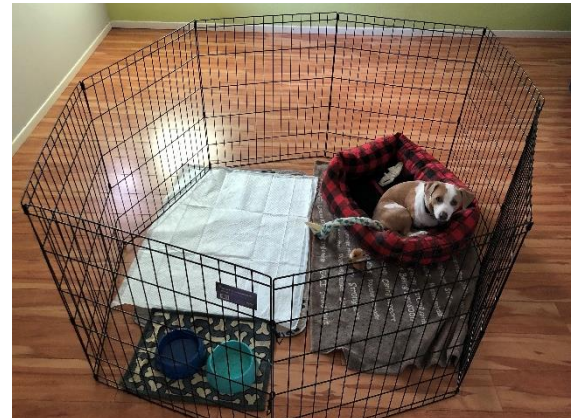
Use an exercise pen to confine Winifred to a small area when you are not home or able to supervise them (see picture). Give them a bed, water, favorite toy, and a potty pad. This "safe spot" will also be a great place to put them when you have visitors to your home, so they don't have to worry about interacting with everyone if they're not comfortable.

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

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 Winifred is not comfortable with strange people or dogs 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.

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

Supervise your dog outside. Even if you have a fenced yard, please do not let Winifred 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.



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

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

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

Don't take Winifred 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.).

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.

We're here to help!

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