

Meet Bobby Bones!

In order to help Bobby Bones and any person involved in making his life the best it can be, we have created the following guide.

Name:

Yes, he knows his name is Bobby Bones! He answers primarily to Bobby, but as with all well loved dogs he has nicknames. He also responds to: Bones, Bobz, Bobster.

Personality:

Bobby is an incredibly loving dog. He likes to snuggle and kiss you and be with you. He is smart and young so his mind and body both need exercise. He learns quickly, both good and bad. He has fear based reactivity to new things and other dogs. He does best with calm concern and clear direction. He wants to know from you that "it's" OK. He doesn't do well with with an elevated voice or harsh discipline. It only elevates his reactivity. We spend time sitting and observing together whatever "it" is that made him excited until you can see and feel him relax. We joke that he will know the different names of things. "Bobby, it's just a truck, bird, mailman, etc. People come and people go Bobz". He is very good in the house. He doesn't counter surf, doesn't take things that aren't his, he sits by the door when he wants out, he uses his multiple dog beds or approved furniture only.

Food:

Bobby needs to be grain free! When we first started taking care of Bobby, he had digestive issues, funny stools, burping which led to throwing up, and he couldn't keep weight on. All of this went away after becoming grain free. He has done very well on Nutra Source Pure Vita Grain Free Turkey and Sweet Potato for his kibble. If he over eats he can still have burping issues. He does best with 3 meals a day, each 1 cup. We use an additional 2-3 ounces of small diced meats for training daily. His vet also recommends 2 tablespoons of plain yogurt 1-2 times a week.



Vet Care:

Bobby's vet is Dr. Angle at the Rum a River Veterinary Clinic. She handles Bobby very well and has been quite helpful. Bobby takes 20mg of Fluoxetine each morning to help him with his anxiety issues. We hide the Fluoxetine in grain free canned food, in with his morning kibble, and he gobbles it up.

He took Apoquel, 16 mg tabs, in the fall months to calm skin irritation on his feet that happened from grass mold. Once the frost came, Bobby's feet were fine and it was discontinued.

As per Dr. Angles recommendation, we have given Bobby a Heartgard tab monthly and a Frontline application in May, June, July, and August.

She would like Bobby's weight to be about 55 pounds, which is where he is now.

Bobby's front left do claw split. It did manage to come completely off on its own after ,a few weeks, but it did lead to a "don't trim my nails" issue. We found it easier to bring him in to have them trimmed. We put a muzzle on to accomplish this, but we all do fine.

Bobby's ears stay looking pretty clean. He does start acting like they bother him by digging at them or really wanting his ears rubbed even though they look clean. We found routine Oti Clens use about once every 3-4 weeks helps.

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Vocabulary:

Sit, stay, shake, other, come, stand, kennel, backseat, drop

"are you hungry...do you want your dinner?"

Lay (like on the ground)

down (like get paws off),

wait (pause and sit while waiting for what's next)

OK (used as a release from previous command)

Heel (walk nice by my side)

Range (can sniff and wander about without pulling)

"Let's Go!" Said in a Happy, excited voice. Used to have him continue walking, away from fixating on something that would increase his reactivity.

Snuggle up (get on your bed and relax)

Car ride

Go for a walk,

Watch me (usually point to my eye and wait for him to look at me for instruction)

"Sorry!" Said strongly with hands up. (It is used when he is barking because he wants something but he can't have it until he sits and stops barking and defers to you.)

Uh uh. (Used when he is reactive to let him know this is inappropriate behavior. Usually same done as you block his view from whatever is causing the reaction.)

Leave it (used when you want him to leave whatever is getting him excited)

Practice calm (used when he is starting to get excited, said very slow and calmly while petting slow and calm)

Good Relax (used when he exhibits signs of relaxing: a sigh, laying down with hips down, resting his head). We are trying to teach a behavior by giving it a name.

Place (go to designated item and stay there, can sit or lay or stand). We use it in many applications and places. It is nice to have him "place" while eating our dinner. We have a dog

bed near the table and he will place himself for a treat and stay until we get up.



Our Daily Routine:

We get up early for work and take Bobby for about a 20 minute walk. He eats his breakfast and wants to go outside right after eating. (He is a private pooper, he likes to find a bush, tree, or plant to hide by, although he does poop on a leash if necessary). He stays in our laundry room when we are gone at work. He sleeps in his crate, but has access to the full room with water, treats, and toys. To make the transition of us leaving non traumatic, we always do this same routine: "Bobby, time to kennel." He runs down and kennels up. We leave relaxing music playing and a low light on. We hide small, soft, grain free treats under several toys and leave him a tippy Kong with Pure Vita "Salmon" dry kibble in it for something different. We put up 2 gates in the doorway to keep him in the laundry room. (He would occasionally jump a single high gate)



When we get home, he greets us at the door. He is learning "Down", to keep him from jumping on you. To keep his excitement under threshold, we have him sit, and "watch me" before opening the gate and "OK" to release him to go upstairs to let him out. After his potty break, he gets his 1 cup of kibble and hangs out with us in the evening. He usually gets a second walk before bed followed by his final 3rd cup of kibble. He gets his teeth brushed nightly. He has a favorite dog bed that he sleeps in, which we bring with when we travel. He sleeps well at night. Although, we find it best to block him from looking out the windows at night, because he would prefer to watch for rabbits rather than go to bed. He does best telling him it's time to snuggle up. On days off or weekends, we usually try to go to different parks and walk him longer. We also tend to do more training, and find "learning opportunities."

Car Rides:

Bobby loves to be with his people and loves to go with for short or long car rides. We call this, "Boppin with a Bobz." He travels well in the car. He knows when it is local travel and he likes to look out the windows to see what's up. He waits nicely while you run your errand and can stay for long periods in the car when temperature permits. He also knows when the wheels are on the highway and when we say, "Bobby, snuggle up" or "Backseat" he lays down until the car slows again.



Toys:

When we first got Bobby, he did not know what toys were or what to do with them. We encourage him to "get a toy". We have a couple toy bins in which he will grab a toy and run and play with it, or squeak it, and some antlers to chew. He does not destroy his stuffed toys. He likes to have his toys tossed up to catch. He doesn't fetch for long outside as he would rather hunt. He will play fetch inside though.

Prey Drive:

Bobby is a Hound dog with huge prey drive. For him, it is all about the hunt and then the chase. He uses mostly his ears, than eyes and nose. After he has caught an animal, he can't figure out why the critter won't get back up to keep playing chase. He has tried to eat some of them, but will "drop" if you're there to tell him to. He has gotten several rabbits, mice, voles, chipmunks and red squirrels, some while on a leash. Because of this huge prey drive, he needs to in a house as an only pet, (A fish should be fine) and he should be supervised whenever it is possible that another animal would be close. In his first adopted home, which had young kids, Bobby escaped out a door and tried to get a small, off leash dog. The dog was ok, but did required a vet and that led Bobby back into rescue. Also, if he is allowed to fixate on the critters, he will try any means to get the critter. He will test a chain link fence and has been known to push out under the fence. A tension line at the bottom of the fence stopped that. He

can also jump a 4 foot chain link fence. He seems to be more tense and his animal obsession escalates at night and shouldn't be trusted off leash.

Tie out:

Bobby ties out well, and will potty while tied out. He does pretty well at not getting tangled and can judge his tie out length well. A note of concern, we make sure we tell him he is tied out and let the tie out have some resistance initially so he knows not to take off full speed. He has broken a harness doing this once when he saw a squirrel. We use a Ruff Wear harness, we call it his 'Houdini Harness', while he is tied out. Notice the "Spot It" light attached. We make sure that is on at night so he is more visible.



Walking:

We find Bobby does best walking with an "Easy Walk" Harness. We find it easy to only buckle and unbuckle the long brown strap. This way, you can just drop the 2 tan straps over his head and the buckle the long brown strap under his chest, behind his front legs. Be sure to place your hand under the buckle, as it has been known to pinch his fine, tender skin there. It is recommended to use a 5 foot leash so there is length to sniff and explore, but short enough to

gain control quickly.



Behavior:

Bobby is a fear based, reactive dog. We do not know exactly why, as we do not know his humble beginnings. We do know he was born on a farm and turned into rescue initially because he was bothering the neighbors cows. Bobby is defiantly afraid of someone approaching, more so if something is in a hand. His vet speculates that he was tased or cattle prodded, but there is no way to know. We have worked extensively with a behaviorist and an in home dog trainer. We have learned how to manage this reactive behavior well and I will try to explain how we do this in different scenarios.

Relaxation Protocol:

<https://www.boulderhumane.org/sites/default/files/ProtocolforRelaxation.pdf>

Dr. Karen Overall's Relaxation Protocol is an incredibly valuable, and important behavior modifying process that has helped us immeasurably. It is simple to do, and only needs to be done for a very short time, but frequently. I would advise starting this protocol ASAP. Read the link, get comfortable with the concept, and enjoy bonding with Bobby. We have a "place" rug we use in the house that we do this on. He is so comfortable with it he often will "place" himself

while he hangs out with us. We also use this "place" rug when welcoming guests into the house.



Target Hand:

This is done by placing a high value treat in your closed fist. Hold your closed fist out to your side and say, "Bobby" firmly. He should turn and nose bump your hand at which time your hand opens to release the treat. "Target Hand" is used to get Bobby to defer to you when you need him to. Times like when he is getting a little excited, or if he is pulling too much, or when you want him to turn to avoid seeing a trigger, or you can use your hand to change his direction. We also use it to work on recall (come) in the yard. You can say his name from across the yard, hold your closed hand out and he will come running.



Watch Me:

This is done to help Bobby learn to defer to you and look to you for direction. Say "Bobby, Watch Me." Point to your eye and wait for him to look at you, then, instruct as needed.

Example: Have Bobby sit at the door before going out. Say, "Watch Me", when he looks at you, say "OK" and open the door to go out. It can be done anytime you want him to defer to you.

Counter Conditioning:

Counter Conditioning is something we do to help Bobby get comfortable with "anything" that can cause reactive issues. The idea is to have him observe the stressful "thing" at a safe distance. This is the distance needed to be able to sit/stay, and be able to still respond to you. It is important to keep him under threshold so "it" is perceived as safe and not threatening to Bobby. For example, to help with his reactivity to people, we go to a store (like a grocery store, Target, gas station, etc). We would have Bobby sit/stay a good distance from the door. You then feed him a small piece of a high value treat (small piece of meat) every time he looks at a person. He doesn't need to look at you. The concept is you are conditioning him by telling him people are good, you get yummy food. The "Counter Conditioning" doesn't happen quickly. It needs to be done for short periods of time, frequently. When you can be confident that he has mastered that distance, you can work at getting a bit closer, always being careful to remain under threshold.

We are using Counter Conditioning to help with Bobby's reactivity to dogs as well. Bobby is very much NOT dog friendly. You will need a greater distance when counter conditioning other dogs. The goal is not to have him get along with other dogs, but to be able to observe and not be obnoxious when he sees one. To do this, pick a place like a pet store, or a neighbor's yard with dogs in a fenced area. Start far away but stand so he can observe while in a sit/stay. Feed him every time he looks at the dog. If Bobby gets up or starts barking, turn to block his view, say "Uh uh, sit/stay". Once he is back under threshold you can turn so he can observe and feed again. Never let him "win" by letting him think that his incorrect behavior made the "situation(dog)" go away.

Out and about:

Exercise and mental stimulus for this smart hound dog is important. It can be a daunting task with a reactive dog. It is good to have multiple options ready so you can choose how best to handle any situation. Prevention is your best option. While you are walking Bobby, be prepared with his easy walk harness, a 5 foot leash, a training pouch on your pocket filled with small diced meat treats. Be sure to constantly observe your surroundings. If no stimulus is around, it is good to make him check in with you now and then by doing a "target hand", or making him sit and "watch me", or do a small piece of a relaxation protocol while outside. Doing these things helps remind Bobby to defer to you. If you see a trigger approaching, decide your best option for handling the approaching trigger. This could be:

- If Bobby has not seen the trigger, you could opt to alter your route to avoid the trigger.

- If Bobby has seen the trigger, you can use a "Target Hand" / "Lets Go!" to turn him around and go the other way.

- You can take the "Learning Opportunity" to find a place where you can get far enough away to do a sit/stay and Counter Condition until the trigger passes making sure Bobby doesn't win by barking and getting up. If he does, turn to block his view, get him to sit/stay and don't continue your walk until he has relaxed and can defer to you.

Welcoming guests:

If people are introduced properly, Bobby will accept and want to be around them. It may be a hassle to go through this process each time, but it works, and it is very much worth it. Do NOT let your guests treat/feed him. YOU need to have the treats to encourage him to defer to you. Also, he shouldn't get used to guests having treats so you can control the situation whether they have treats or not. Have a "place" rug a fair distance from the door. You stand next to Bobby while he is leashed and have someone else let your guests in or instruct your guests to let themselves in. Tell your guests that they can glance at Bobby but don't stare and don't address him. Have them set their things down(items in hand can be a trigger) and take off their coats. Then, have the guest go sit down. All along, Bobby is observing and you are Counterconditioning/feeding while he observes your guests. Bobby should be in a sit/stay and each time he looks at the guests, feed him. When it seems like his initial reaction is over and he is able to defer to you, sit/stay, and he seems calm, you can take steps closer. Repeat the sit/stay and Counter Conditioning. Again, when Bobby seems calm, you can leash walk Bobby

near your guests so he can briefly smell them. Make sure your guests know not to reach out. After your brief sniffing, continue past the guests and sit next to Bobby more than a leash distance from your guests. Continue visiting with your guests and feed Bobby when he looks at them. Eventually, when you know he is calm, you can release the leash to have him greet them. Encourage him to stay down, and be ready to get the leash if need be. If you know this process isn't working, it is best to put him in a safe room with a bone and try the visit another time.

Safety First!

Bobby is a very loving, deserving dog and we are happy to continue helping those who help him. Please feel free to contact us with concerns, questions.