

This little dog has a lot of moxie

Written by By Sam Mazzota King Syndicate
Friday, 12 April 2024 00:00

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I adopted a small mutt from the local shelter and named her "Moxie." She's adorable but really energetic. She'll actually jump straight up in the air as high as my waist! She also tugs hard at the leash when we walk. How do I tame all of this energy? — Janice F., Hyde Park, New York

DEAR JANICE: Congratulations on your new pet! Moxie sounds like a bundle of joy. But I can understand that all her energy can be tiring.

In addition to walks twice a day (or more, if you can swing it), give Moxie plenty of puppy toys to play with at home, and spend time with her on the floor just playing fetch and helping her work off more of that energy.

She may also respond very well to a consistent schedule of walks, feeding and bedtime (yes, bedtime). Build certain predictable routines around each of these events. When it's time for a walk, call Moxie and have her sit while you put on her leash. During walks, keep the leash short and work on the "heel" command. But when in a safe, open area, give Moxie more room on the leash to explore. When it's bedtime, create a routine that is the same every night — one that is positive, with a little play time and a signal to settle down and rest (such as turning down the lights).

Now, if Moxie's energetic behavior is morphing into something more serious, like destroying furniture or being aggressive toward other dogs or humans on walks, that's a problem you'll need to address as soon as possible. Talk to Moxie's vet about ways to reduce her hyperactivity and anxiety (if those are the causes). If she isn't responding to basic behavioral training, hire a trainer to help.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

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