



# A Guide to Understanding Dog Breeds & Behaviors



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# All Purpose Working Dog

## Function:

- Have been used for herding, cart pulling, and guarding
- Used as an all purpose working dog under human direction



## Behavioral characteristics:

- Easy to train
- Playful, gregarious and energetic
- Slow to mature
- Use their front paws when interacting and playing (they “box”)

## Potential issues:

- Aggressive toward strangers and other animals if not well socialized at an early age
- Consistent jumpers
- Most are large dogs and are difficult to physically control, necessitating consistent training for command control
- Need daily exercise to channel energy
- Not appropriate off leash
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Slobbery

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Friendly and social
- Gregarious and not self aware
- Rude and frontal

## Breeds:

- Boxer



# Freight Haulers & Sled Pullers

## Function:

- Haul heavy items by pulling a cart
- Hauling in and retrieving heavy items
- Pull sleds
- Herd reindeer
- Search and rescue

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Draft dogs are calm and gentle
- Independent and aloof
- Protective, loyal, and courageous
- Sled dogs are energetic and active

## Potential issues:

- Chow Chows can be unfriendly toward strangers and are generally a one or two person dog
- Difficult to leash train
- Difficult to obedience train
- Do not thrive in hot climates
- Dominant and bossy with other animals
- Highly destructive when adolescent (under 3 years old)
- Larger dogs are generally friendly and social
- Larger dogs are generally inactive indoors
- May prefer outdoors to indoors
- Not appropriate off leash
- Obstinate
- Rambunctious as puppies
- Siberians and Malamutes are excessively vocal
- Siberians are excessively mouthy and can dig and escape their confinement



# Freight Haulers & Sled Pullers cont.

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Aloof or bossy with other dogs
- Chow Chows are aloof and stoic
- Dominant
- Intolerant of handling
- Malamutes are dominant and “arrogant”
- Mastiffs don’t kennel well due to protectiveness and dominance
- Siberians are mouthy

## Breeds:

- Alaskan Malamute
- Bernese Mountain Dog (Mastiff breed)
- Chow Chow
- Greater Swiss Mountain Dog (Mastiff breed)
- Newfoundland
- Portuguese Water Dog
- Saint Bernard (Mastiff breed)
- Samoyed
- Siberian Husky



# Fighting/Big Game Dogs



## Function:

- Watchdog
- Hunt large game (bears, deer, etc.)
- Bull baiting
- Fighting

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Brave, determined, alert and self-confident
- Capable of ferocity
- Dominant, bossy, tenacious, rude, and controlling
- Easily aroused
- Not self aware
- Prone to animal aggression
- Protective and possessive



## Potential issues:

- Can be aloof or unfriendly toward strangers
- Highly destructive
- May not be appropriate for young children
- Must be well socialized early in order to minimize animal aggression
- Must have strong, consistent leadership and training at an early age
- Prone to arousal and arousal issues
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Quick to learn, slow to comply
- Should never be permitted off leash
- Territorial aggression



## Expectations for evaluation:

- Bossy and dominant
- Don't kennel well due to aggressive tendencies
- Environmentally reactive

## Breeds:

- Akita
- American Bulldog
- American Pit Bull Terrier (see pages 5-6 for more info)
- American Staffordshire Terrier (see pages 5-6 for more info)
- Boston Terrier (Through selective breeding, their size and aggressive tendencies have decreased.)
- Bull Terrier
- English Mastiff
- Neapolitan Mastiff
- Rhodesian Ridgeback
- Shar-pei



# Pit Bulls

## Function

- Crossed Bulldogs with Terriers for Rat-Baiting competitions
- Dog fighting – better spectator sport, higher stakes

## Characteristics

- Hold, shake and tear bite style
- Increased muscle and tissue damage
- Agile to avoid serious injuries
- Endurance and athleticism
- Aggression toward other dogs
- Ignore signs of submission – fight to death
- Can be difficult to identify warning of impending attack
- High pain threshold, fight despite physical pain and suffering
- New breed – Pit Bull Terrier
- Same as American Staffordshire Terrier – Pit Bull referred to function
- American Pit Bull Terrier recognized as a breed for UKC
- American Staffordshire Terrier recognized as a breed for AKC
- 100% overlap in breed standards – virtually indistinguishable





# Pit Bulls cont.

## Potential issues:

- Bite and hold
- Can be dominant and controlling
- High prey drive
- Highly destructive, one of the most destructive breeds
- Highly susceptible to Parvovirus, Babesia, Demodectic mange, Ringworm, Hip Dysplasia
- Highly territorial
- Incredibly high pain tolerance, difficult to detect injuries
- Leash reactive
- Not appropriate for dogs parks
- Prone to arousal and arousal issues
- Tend toward animal aggression, despite training and socialization, some revert to animal aggression when socially mature (18 – 36 months)



## Expectations for evaluation:

- Aggressive toward dogs
- Appeasing toward people
- Don't kennel well due to arousal and aggressive tendencies
- Likely to redirect when aroused
- Must observe arousal behavior to thoroughly evaluate
- Rude and inappropriate with dogs
- Stoic when handled abruptly

# Coach Dogs

## Function:

- Bred to run beside horse-drawn carriages
- Guard horses and carriages
- Also used as a vermin hunter, hound, shepherd and guard dogs



## Behavioral characteristics:

- High activity, energy levels, rambunctious
- Highly social and friendly with familiar friends and family
- Playful
- Protective
- Sensitive and high strung
- Slow to mature
- Require training for control and manners
- Wary of strangers

## Potential issues:

- Easily trained, but short attention span
- Excessive barking
- Highly destructive
- Must have physical exercise to channel energy appropriately
- Require training for control and manners
- Wary of strangers

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Nervous or neurotic when kenneled

## Breeds:

- Dalmatian



# Companions



## Function:

- Several breeds have evolved such that they rarely perform their original function
- Some breeds were entirely for companionship or show

## Behavioral Characteristics:

- Widely varied

## Potential Issues:

- Excessive barking
- Need for exercise and training
- Nervous or neurotic
- Nippy, handling sensitivities



## Breeds:

- American Eskimo (watchdog, guarding)
- Bichon (circus dog, show dog)
- Finnish Spitz (bird hunter)
- Keeshond (sled dog)
- Miniature Poodle (show dog)
- Schipperke (guarding, vermin hunters)
- Tibetan Terrier (not a Terrier)



# Toys



## Function:

- Companionship
- Show

## Behavioral Characteristics:

- Nervous, neurotic or high strung
- Vocal

## Potential Issues:

- Aggressive with dogs if not properly socialized
- Difficult to housetrain
- Excessive barking
- Must be well socialized from an early age to minimize nervousness and timidity
- Nippy with children
- Prone to periodontal disease



## Breeds

- Affenpinscher
- Brussels Griffon
- Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
- Chihuahua
- Chinese Crested
- English Toy Spaniel
- Havanese
- Italian Greyhound
- Japanese Chin
- Maltese
- Manchester Terrier (Toy)
- Miniature Pinscher
- Papillion
- Pekingese
- Pomeranian
- Pug
- Shiba Inu (flush small birds)
- Shih Tzu
- Silky Terrier
- Toy Fox Terrier
- Toy Poodle
- Yorkshire Terrier



# Hunting Dogs

# Retrievers



## Function:

- Assist hunters in hunting land and water fowl
- Stay near hunters and retrieve on command
- Retrieve fowl and objects from land or water using soft mouth
- Bred for endurance

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Active, energetic and great stamina
- Easy to train, attentive to handler
- High play drive
- Highly social, strong pack drive
- Need training and activities to channel energy
- Slow to mature
- Social with other animals

## Potential issues:

- Destructive chewing
- Digging
- Excessive barking
- Mouthy
- Need training to channel energy
- Play in any available water
- Prone to ear infections
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Slow to mature

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Easy going
- Highly friendly and social
- May be rough and rude – not self aware
- Playful and active



# Retrievers cont.

## Breeds:

- Chesapeake Bay Retriever (flusher)
- Curly-coated Retriever
- Flat-coated Retriever (flusher)
- Golden Retriever (flusher)
- Labrador Retriever (flusher)
- Newfoundland (water)
- Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever
- Portuguese Water Dog (water)
- Standard Poodle (water)



# Setters

## Function:

- Assist hunters in hunting land fowl
- Run quickly back and forth seeking fowl
- Once found, identify fowl for the hunter by “setting” in a crouched position
- Bred for endurance

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Active, energetic with great stamina
- Alert and environmentally focused
- Friendly and social
- Need training and activities to channel energy
- Social with other animals

## Potential issues:

- Destructive chewing
- Digging
- Easily distracted making training challenging
- Excessive barking
- High strung, nervous, fearful
- Need training to channel energy and environmental focus
- Prone to ear infections
- Prone to hip dysplasia

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Friendly and social when not distracted by environment
- Playful and active
- Slightly nervous or aloof

## Breeds:

- Brittany
- English Setter
- Gordon Setter
- Irish Setter





# Spaniels

## Function:

- Assist hunters in hunting land and water fowl
- Run quickly into foliage looking for fowl
- Spring into brush to flush the fowl
- Bred for endurance

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Active, energetic with great stamina
- Alert and environmentally focused
- Easy to train, but easily distracted
- Friendly and social
- Need training and activities to channel energy
- Social with other animals

## Potential issues:

- Cocker Spaniels can be difficult to housetrain
- Destructive chewing
- Digging
- Excessive barking
- Need training and activities to channel energy and environmental focus
- Nervous or fearful
- Nippy with children
- Prone to ear infections
- Prone to hip dysplasia

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Highly distracted by environment
- Nervous when handled (especially Cocker Spaniels)
- Socially aloof due to environmental focus, fleeting friendliness



# Spaniels cont.

## Breeds:

- American Cocker Spaniel (flusher)
- American Water Spaniel (flusher)
- Cavalier King Charles Spaniel (Toy)
- Clumber Spaniel (flusher)
- English Cocker Spaniel (flusher)
- English Springer Spaniel (flusher)
- Field Spaniel (flusher)
- Irish Water Spaniel (flusher)
- Sussex Spaniel (flusher)
- Welsh Springer Spaniel (flusher)



# Pointers



## Function:

- Assist hunters in hunting land fowl
- Scent track land fowl
- Locate and “point” to land fowl
- Bred for endurance

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Active, energetic with great stamina
- Alert and environmentally focused
- Can have high prey drive for critters
- Easy to train, but easily distracted
- Friendly and social
- Need training and activities to channel energy
- Social with other animals



## Potential issues:

- Destructive chewing
- Excessive barking
- Jumping, escaping
- Need training and activities to channel energy and environmental focus
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Weimaraners can be nervous and neurotic
- Weimaraners are particularly exuberant and distractible

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Don't kennel well – nervous, reactive
- Highly distracted by environment
- Nervously busy, have a “to do” list
- Socially aloof due to environmental focus, fleeting friendliness

## Breeds:

- English Pointer
- German Shorthaired Pointer
- German Wirehaired Pointer
- Italian Spinone
- Vizsla
- Weimaraner
- Wirehaired Pointing Griffon



# Scent Hounds



## Function:

- Scent tracker
- Relatively slow gait in order for hunters to follow behind
- Bark or bay when game is found (treed or dened)
- Work independent of humans, but cooperatively with other dogs
- Bred for endurance

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Active, energetic with great stamina
- Alert and environmentally focused
- “Bay” when they vocalize
- Easily distracted
- Friendly and social
- Need training and activities to channel energy
- Smaller dogs are active and energetic, larger dogs slightly less energetic



## Potential issues:

- Can be slobbery
- Excessive barking
- Generally friendly and social
- Not easy to leash train
- Not easy to obedience train
- Not ideal for apartment living
- Prone to ear infections
- Smaller dogs can be obstinate and bossy with people and dogs

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Beagles and Bassets – bossy with other dogs
- Highly distracted by environment, leash pullers
- Socially aloof due to environmental focus, fleeting friendliness
- Vocal when kenneled



# Scent Hounds cont.

## Breeds:

- American Foxhound
- Basset Hound
- Beagle
- Black & Tan Coonhound
- Bloodhound
- English Foxhound
- Harrier
- Norwegian Elkhound (herding, watchdog, guarding, sledding)
- Otterhound
- Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen



# Sight Hounds



## Function:

- Hunt by visually tracking movement
- Take down larger game by working cooperatively with other dogs
- Lure coursing
- Bred for sprinting – short bursts of intense energy

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Aloof with strangers
- Generally gentle and calm
- Generally independent
- High prey drive
- Social with like-sized dogs
- Sprinter athletes – bursts of energy with long periods of rest

## Potential issues:

- Highly destructive when adolescent (under 3 years old)
- Must be well socialized to small animals at an early age due to prey drive
- Need daily exercise
- Not easy to obedience train
- Relatively low activity when indoors (couch potatoes)
- Rhodesian Ridgebacks can be quite wary of strangers and fiercely protective of their home and family
- Sensitive to anesthesia
- Will run if permitted off leash



## Expectations for evaluation:

- Socially aloof with people and animals
- Stoic when routinely handled
- Panics or defensive when abruptly handled



# Sight Hounds cont.

## Breeds:

- Afghan
- Basenji
- Borzoi
- Greyhound
- Ibizan Hound
- Irish Wolfhound
- Pharaoh Hound
- Rhodesian Ridgeback
- Saluki
- Scottish Deerhound
- Whippet



# Badger Hounds

## Function:

- Scent track badgers (and other small game)
- Short legs and long nose adaptive for digging and getting to small holes
- Bred for endurance



## Behavioral characteristics:

- Active with great stamina
- Brave, tenacious, strong willed
- Lively, energetic, curious, mischievous
- Protective and possessive

## Potential issues:

- Dominant and controlling
- Excessive barking
- Nippy and intolerant of children
- Prone to spinal disc problems
- Quick to learn, slow to comply
- Unfriendly toward strangers

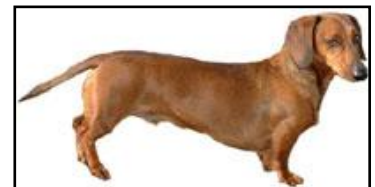


## Expectations for evaluation:

- Bossy and dominant
- Handling sensitivities

## Breeds:

- Dachshund





# Terriers



## Function:

- Control vermin, rodent population by hunting
- Dig prey out of its den and kill
- Work independently
- Bred for endurance – always working

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Alert, vigilant, highly intelligent
- “Big dogs in little bodies”
- Easily aroused
- Feisty, headstrong, brave
- High prey drive
- High spirited, busy, tenacious
- Highly territorial and protective
- Loyal and bonded to familiar friends and family

## Potential issues:

- Destructive chewing
- Dominant and controlling with people and other animals
- Excessive barking
- Excessive, persistent diggers
- Intolerant of young children
- Leash reactive
- Must be well socialized in order to minimize aggressive tendencies
- Nervous and/or fearful
- Often aggressive toward other animals
- Prone to arousal and arousal issues
- Quick to learn, but easily bored
- Requires consistent leadership and training
- Should have a “job” to channel energy and drive
- Snappy, mouthy when handled against their will
- Wary or unfriendly toward strangers

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Bossy and intolerant
- Environmentally focused
- Handling sensitivities



# Terriers cont.



## Expectations for evaluation continued:

- Likely to redirect when aroused
- Nervous and excitable
- Reactive when kenneled

## Breeds:

- Small
  - Australian Terrier
  - Border Terrier
  - Cairn Terrier
  - Dandie Dinmont Terrier
  - Manchester Terrier (Standard)
  - Miniature Bull Terrier
  - Miniature Schnauzer
  - Norfolk Terrier
  - Norwich Terrier
  - Parson Russell Terrier or Jack Russell Terrier
  - Rat Terrier
  - Scottish Terrier
  - Sealyham Terrier
  - Skye Terrier
  - Smooth Fox Terrier
  - West Highland Terrier
  - Wire Fox Terrier
- Medium
  - Bedlington Terrier
  - Bull Terrier
  - German Pinscher
  - Irish Terrier
  - Kerry Blue Terrier
  - Lakeland Terrier
  - Soft-coated Wheaten Terrier
  - Staffordshire Bull Terrier
  - Standard Schnauzer (guarding, hunting, tracking, retrieving)
  - Welsh Terrier
- Large
  - Airedale
  - American Staffordshire Terrier (see pages 5-6 for more info)
  - Black Russian Terrier



# Livestock Dogs

# Cattle Drivers

## Function:

- Drive cattle over long distances by nipping at them
- Work independently
- Bred for endurance



## Behavioral characteristics:

- Easily aroused
- Highly intelligent, vigilant
- Highly territorial, brave guard dogs
- Independent
- Loyal and protective of familiar friends and family
- Very active with great stamina, easily bored

## Potential issues:

- Animal aggressive
- Digging
- Dominant, bossy dogs
- Excessive barking
- Highly destructive
- Leash reactive
- Need consistent training and leadership
- Nip and herd anything that moves (including cars, joggers, playing children, etc.)
- Nippy and reprimanding of children
- Prone to arousal and arousal issues
- Quick to learn, easily bored
- Require daily exercise and things to do
- Suspicious of strangers



## Expectations for evaluation:

- Bossy, patrolling behavior
- Don't kennel well due to arousal and reactivity
- Handling sensitivities
- Likely to redirect when aroused



# Cattle Drivers cont.

## Breeds:

- Australian Cattle Dog – Queensland Heeler
- Australian Kelpie
- Bouvier des Flandres
- Catahoula
- German Pinscher
- Giant Schnauzer
- Pumi
- Rottweiler
- Welsh Corgi (Cardigan & Pembroke)



# Sheep Drovers



## Function:

- Crouch down and drive sheep with intense stare
- Work cooperatively with other dogs
- Work with or without human direction
- Bred for endurance

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Affectionate, loyal and protective of familiar friends and family
- Easily aroused
- Easily trained and responsive to commands
- Highly intelligent, energetic, active, and agile
- Highly sensitive

## Potential issues:

- Destructive when bored
- Excessive barking
- Herd anything that moves (including cars, joggers, playing children, etc.)
- Must be well socialized to minimize nervousness
- Nervous or neurotic
- Potential fear biters if not well trained and socialized
- Prone to arousal and arousal issues
- Require training and “jobs” to do
- Wary of strangers



# Sheep Drivers cont.

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Don't kennel well due to nervousness – may see compulsive behaviors or reactivity
- Friendly and social, but easily distracted
- Handling sensitivities
- Some fearful and neurotic

## Breeds:

- Australian Shepherd
- Bearded Collie
- Belgian Sheepdog
  - Tervuren
  - Malinois
  - Laekenois
  - Groenendael
- Border Collie
- Briard
- Canaan Dog
- Catalanian Sheepdog
- Collie
- Dutch Shepherd
- German Shepherd
- English Shepherd
- Komondor
- Kuvasz
- North American Shepherd (Mini Australian Shepherd)
- Old English Sheepdog
- Puli
- Shetland Sheepdog



# Tenders



## Function:

- Tend and guard the perimeter by keeping livestock in and trespassers out
- Work with or without human direction
- Bred for endurance and sprinting

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Bold, direct, fearless, vigilant
- Easily aroused
- High prey drive
- Highly intelligent, easy to train and quick to comply
- Loyal and protective of familiar friends and family
- Strong herding and guarding instinct
- Strong pack drive



## Potential issues:

- Destructive when bored
- Excessive barking
- German Shepherds are very mouthy
- Herd anything that moves (including cars, joggers, playing children, etc.)
- Leash reactive
- Must be well socialized to minimize nervousness & fear biting
- Must be well socialized to other animals at an early age
- Nervous or neurotic
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Prone to arousal and arousal issues
- Require consistent leadership and training
- Very active and busy when adolescent (under 3 years old)
- Wary of strangers





# Tenders cont.

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Bossy, patrolling behavior
- Don't kennel well due to reactivity and territoriality
- Environmentally focused
- Environmentally reactive
- Nervous or neurotic
- Panics or defensive when abruptly handled
- Reciprocally friendly
- Stoic when routinely handled

## Breeds:

- Belgian Sheepdog
  - Laekenois
  - Malinois
- Bouvier des Flandres
- Canaan Dog
- Dutch Shepherd
- German Shepherd



# Guardians



## Function:

- Guard livestock, protect from predators
- Work independently
- Bred for endurance, work constantly

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Alert and possessive
- Dominant
- Gentle, affectionate
- Loyal and highly protective of familiar friends and family
- Highly intelligent
- Independent and aloof
- Low prey drive, but highly protective
- Quick to learn, but slow to comply
- Suspicious of strangers
- Territorial behavior



## Potential issues:

- Large dogs, can be difficult to control if untrained
- Must be well socialized early in order to accept other animals
- Must start training very early to instill leadership
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Protective of anything valued
- Unfriendly or aggressive toward strangers



## Expectations for evaluation:

- Aloof toward people and other dogs
- Dominant behavior
- Stoic when handled

## Breeds:

- Anatolian Shepherd
- German Pinscher
- Great Pyrenees
- Kuvasz



# Guarding & Protection

(Other than flock or livestock guarding)

## Function:

- Many Mastiffs used as arena gladiators
- Most used as a guardian, watchdog or bodyguard

## Behavioral characteristics:

- Aloof with strangers
- Calm, gentle dogs
- Watchful, protective, self-confident

## Potential issues:

- Aggressive with strangers
- Aggressive toward other animals if not well socialized early
- Dominant and controlling
- Many are generally lazy, but require regular exercise for training, enrichment and stimulation
- Most are large dogs and are difficult to physically control, necessitating consistent training for command control
- Not appropriate off leash
- Prone to hip dysplasia
- Protective of anything valued
- Relatively inactive indoors
- Requires strong, consistent leadership and training
- Some breeds are slobbery
- Stubborn and difficult to train



# Guarding & Protection cont.

## Expectations for evaluation:

- Dominant and bossy
- Don't kennel well due to reactivity, territoriality and dominance
- Environmentally focused
- Intolerant of handling



## Breeds:

- Akita
- Black Russian Terrier
- Lhasa Apso
- Mastiff
  - Bernese Mountain Dog
  - Bullmastiff
  - Doberman Pinscher
  - English Mastiff
  - English Bulldog
  - French Bulldog
  - Great Dane
  - Greater Swiss Mountain Dog
  - Neapolitan Mastiff
  - Rottweiler
  - Saint Bernard
- Giant Schnauzer
- Standard Schnauzer
- Tibetan Spaniel



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