

THE BORDER COLLIE



BREED CHARACTERISTICS

The herding ability of the Border Collie is legendary. Once you have seen these dogs in the field working sheep, you will never forget the intelligence, eye, and motivation of this exceptional breed. Living with such a dog can be challenging. The Border Collie Society of America offers its present and continuing support.

As described in the Border Collie standard, the Border Collie is a well-balanced, medium-sized dog of athletic appearance, displaying grace and agility in equal measure with substance and stamina. His hard, muscular body has a smooth outline which conveys the impression of effortless movement and endless endurance, characteristics which have made him the world's premier sheep herding dog. He is energetic, alert, and eager. Intelligence is his hallmark.

The Border Collie is a workaholic, requiring substantial mental as well as physical exercise. That's the good news. The bad news is that these are the very traits that can make him difficult to live with. A fenced yard or enclosure is important to keep your Border Collie safe. Traffic is especially hazardous for this breed since the dogs tend to try to herd cars if not carefully trained to avoid them. A fenced yard will not provide enough physical exercise, nor will a walk around the block and a few tossed balls. Boredom is the source of many behavioral and training problems. A Border Collie that is confined alone for long periods of time tends to develop compulsive behaviors such as chewing or digging. He also

may become depressed. This is not a dog that will happily lie in a corner and watch the world go by. In addition to being intelligent and eager, as a breed they can be quirky, inventive, strong-willed, moody, independent, territorial, and manipulative. They are driven to participate in as many family activities as possible. It is up to you to make this participation constructive. Dog performance activities such as herding, agility, obedience, tracking, and flyball can help provide the physical and mental exercise a Border Collie requires. Obviously very appealing in a thirty second TV commercial, this dynamo can be frustrating in a pet home environment.

The Border Collie will herd anything that moves. While chasing cars can be disastrous for the dog, when misdirected towards children the Border Collie's herding instinct can be problematic for the entire family. If the Border Collie decides that children are not obeying he might think that a nip is in order to discipline them. Most Border Collies react very quickly to stimulation, which can make them extremely sensitive to sudden sounds and movement. They often find the noisy games older children play disturbing and over-stimulating.

TRAINING

While a well-trained and socialized Border Collie makes a superb companion and working partner, this does not happen by accident. Many Border Collies tend to be uncertain and a little spooky. They need to be reassured that the world at large is a fine place. Although a certain amount of firmness may be necessary, harsh behavior on your part will only tend to create a shy and

fearful dog.

All dogs should be trained to use a crate, as this is the safest way to protect the dog and your belongings when the dog is home alone or unsupervised. The safest way for the dog to ride in a car is to be confined in a crate. You should attend Puppy Classes which are now available in most cities in the United States. Puppy Classes provide a head start on the training process. They are an easy and pleasurable way to socialize your puppy and to expose him to new things in a safe setting. More advanced training will make him a welcome part of your household and allow participation in many of the exciting activities offered by the AKC and other organizations.

SPAY AND NEUTER

• Breeding Border Collies is a tremendous responsibility. The breeder has in his hands the future of the breed, both physical and mental. Responsible breeders will evaluate their breeding stock on the basis of herding ability, temperament, structure, physical soundness, and overall health. The Border Collie is subject to such genetic diseases as hip dysplasia, eye disease, and epilepsy. A predisposition to allergies also occurs. The breeder should have researched pedigrees and checked that the stock is free from genetic defects to the extent possible with current technology.

Responsible breeders will have the time, facilities, and finances to properly raise, socialize, and provide health care for their litters. They investigate potential buyers and educate new owners to understand

Border Collie needs and instincts. They do

their best to make certain the dog and family are well suited to each other. Finally, they will take back, at any time and without question, any pup they breed, so that the dogs are not abandoned, relinquished to shelters, or placed with rescue organizations.

The Border Collie Society of America recommends that any dog being considered for breeding be not only of sound temperament and structure but also have achieved some success in performance events, especially herding. The dog should be certified as being free from hip dysplasia and eye disease. For the sake of their pet and the breed as a whole, owners have a responsibility to spay or neuter those Border Collies that do not meet the highest standards for breeding. Spaying and neutering are both relatively simple procedures and have positive health benefits. Neutered males and spayed females tend to live longer, in part due to a lower risk for some cancers. Neither procedure will cause the dog to gain weight. It may take the edge off of an aggressive or anxious dog, but otherwise will not change the dog's temperament. The AKC welcomes spayed and neutered dogs into all herding, obedience, agility, tracking, and Junior Showmanship events.

Once you have your Border Collie, feel free to call your breeder if you have questions or problems. Chances are that the breeder has encountered the same questions before and will be able to help you. Consult your veterinarian when you encounter behavior

problems. Often there is a physical cause.

The Border Collie Society of America will be pleased to provide you with more information about this remarkable breed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

BORDER COLLIE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY.....STATE.....ZIP.....



PLEASE SEND INFORMATION ON

- BORDER COLLIE TIPS
- EVENTS AND COMPETITION
- PUPPY TRAINING
- BCSA MEMBERSHIP

BCSA WEB SITE

<http://www.bordercolliesociety.com>