

## Breeds for different lifestyles

As a professional dog trainer you need to be familiar with various breeds and the traits they are born with- don't forget that most breeds were originally bred for a purpose. You need to become very familiar with breeds and the traits that come with them in order to counsel your clients on the best breed for their lifestyle. It will also help you in figuring out why certain breeds tend to have specific behavioral problems. For example: A client calls with what they perceive to be a very big behavior problem - their dog keeps digging in the yard. Finding out that their dog is a terrier should clue you in.

As a professional trainer, you'll have the opportunity to guide prospective owners into selecting a dog that fits well into their lives. Your expertise on temperament and breed characteristics can be invaluable to prospective owners.

### **Terriers**

With farming came the rats, weasels, and gophers on the farm fields and in the henhouses, and farmers needed help. TERRIERS: hard fighting and hard living. If they were human they would be beer guzzlers, bar fighters, football players, and weight lifters.

Imagine their job: to go to ground and grab an animal that is fighting for its life. When they go after the animal, they could end up anywhere underground. When they bark, the owner digs them free. If they didn't bark, they were not found and disappeared.

- Terriers are fearless. Does anything intimidate them? Nope. They are very courageous. Never back away from a fight. They will face and fight with a fox, badger, even weasels.
- Predatory, they chase. If not trained otherwise, small animals including cats are on the list. Once they start chasing, they are hard to stop.
- Digging- don't forget what their job was. Digging is something they have to do to get to their quarry. A designated digging area is advised for terriers.
- Barking is a terrier thing. Whether they are excited, annoyed, happy or bored they bark. If you don't want a barking dog, don't get a terrier.
- Dog aggression, they tend to be dog aggressive and are a little dominant. They think they are much bigger than they are.

### **Retrievers**

Retrievers were created to retrieve game to the hunter. Their job is to sit by the hunter until they are dispatched to retrieve a shot bird. They also need to retrieve with a soft mouth without leaving a mark on the bird. They have to take direction at great distances and often work in ice cold water.

- Retrievers are generally not touch sensitive. They have to swim through icy waters and run through brush. They tend to be physically tough dogs and are normally tolerant of kids.

- Being a hunting dog, they are not sensitive to noise like gunshots or kids yelling. They are usually calm around children.
- Over breeding has become a problem.
- When hunters go hunting, they usually have a buddy with them- they can't grumble at a hunting partner. If someone was to break into your house they will show him or her the way to the good stuff.
- Chessie's are the only breed that doesn't fit into this mold- they tend to be more aggressive.
- Retrievers tend to need something in their mouth. If they can't find anything else, they might use your arm, but not in an aggressive way.
- They are active dogs that need plenty of exercise.
- You will wear out throwing a ball to a retriever before they do.

## **Spaniels**

Bred to run in front of hunters and flush the birds into flight. The difference between spaniels and pointers is pointers work further away from the hunter and have to point and wait until hunter gets there. Spaniels are more active and flush the birds by jumping around. Spaniels need to hunt close to the hunter so he can be in range to shoot the bird that is flushed. After flushing the bird, the spaniel usually sits until the hunter shoots the bird. The hunter then sends the dog to retrieve it.

- Spaniels are generally eager to please. It takes a lot of willingness to please in order for the dog to stay next to the hunter. Good spaniels are rarely aloof or hard to handle.
- Spaniels are not bred for any aggression. They love everyone and everything. Your kids, the neighbor kids, a stranger kid. They are very friendly.
- Over popular breeds have been damaged (American cocker, English Springer) creating aggressive and unsound dogs.

## **Pointers**

These dogs were bred to be on the go. They can cover 10 miles of rugged terrain in a few hours. They work independently and away from the hunter. They find the bird and point it out until the hunter comes and flushes it and shoots it.

- Pointers are dogs that were bred to run long distances in hunting and have great endurance. They are dogs that require runs and throwing the ball on a daily basis, even two times a day, to be happy.
- Since they have to run through anything on the field while hunting, they are physically tough so training is a requirement.
- Since they were bred to be independent and work on their own at a distance from hunter, they may be a bit more difficult in training.

## **Setters**

Work similar to a pointer but is more pliable. They also need more grooming.

- All setters need daily activity. They are not overly active, but need their daily exercise.
- They are willing to please and are sensitive to their owners.

## **Guardians of the flock (not herding dogs)**

These breeds were created to look as much like the sheep as possible so they can blend in. They wait until the predator comes close before they bark, attack and chase it away, but not too far. It is useless if they chase a predator too far and leave the flock with no one to guard it.

- These are dogs that are independent because they work on their own and they don't wait for you to tell them to act on a problem. (Be careful this might carry into the home.) They are serious dogs and require training.
- They tend to be barkers at night. It might look like they are barking for no reason, but they bark to let everyone know they are on duty.
- They would be useless if they left their flock and wandered off. They will patrol the territory, but not wander off from it. However, if you don't show the dog the territory, he might do it for himself and include your neighbor's houses and yards.
- These dogs are very big and very serious about their work. They can be a problem if not socialized and trained as early as possible. They will bond to their family and are aloof to other people.
- They were bred to protect. They will protect the house even if you don't need them to. They also will act very aggressive to strange dogs coming on the property.

## **Scent hounds**

Scent hounds hunt using their nose. They have one of the best great noses in the group, which is the bloodhound. They generally hunt in groups, but are independent and have to work on their own without

the handler. They also have a resounding bay to mark their spot. They handle being housed in close quarters.

- These dogs have amazing scenting ability. They live by their nose. Their scenting ability is still not measured, but it is thought that they are able to scent in the thousands or possibly a million times better than us.
- They tend to have their noses on the ground most of the time. If a dog picks up a trail they are gone. They are hard to control once on the trail.
- They also have a joy of eating. They might get into garbage or steal food that's left out.
- Housebreaking can sometimes become a challenge.
- Generally these dogs are not very dog aggressive. This trait was specially bred out of them since they might have to live in close quarters. They have low territorial aggression and tend to like strangers.

## **Sight hounds**

Sight hounds hunt using their eyes. They are the fastest breeds and some of the oldest breeds. They hunt and catch, but the hunter has to come and retrieve the game.

- Sight hounds are visually stimulated. You might not notice something in the distance, but your sight hound probably saw it.
- They might give chase as well. The good thing is when it disappears from sight it also might disappear from your dog's mind. Out of sight, out of mind.
- They have low body fat and a short coat. They need a soft spot to lie on. They will use your furniture if you don't provide them with a soft spot.
- They are generally handler sensitive dogs.

## **Guard dogs**

Developed to help guard their owner's possessions.

- These are extremely alert dogs.
- Physically strong and mentally strong, they need early training.

- Aggression of all kinds. These dogs were bred to be aggressive in the presence of a threat.
- Strong minded and sure of themselves, they take action into their own hands. If you don't take charge, they will.
- They tend to bark a lot, especially from behind a barrier. They want to warn you to stay out.
- Powerful dogs that look and are intimidating. Owners need to be careful that they are not the ones that become intimidated.
- Watch: over protectiveness, barking, possessiveness, fighting w/ dogs, dominance, territorial and fear aggression.

### **Mastiffs - French, Neapolitan, Bull, English**

These are old breeds. They are massive in size and are very strong dogs. Originally bred for fighting, guarding, hunting, carting.

- These dogs are in 100 pound plus range.
- Very Powerful dogs.
- You can have over protectiveness, barking, possessiveness, fighting with dogs, dominance, territorial and fear aggression, shyness and fearful.

### **Gentle Giants: Draft/Rescue**

They are used either to pull carts or save someone drowning. These dogs are strong, but also gentle. They love people. They are giants but very sweet dogs. Laid back, easygoing, and willing to please. Since these dogs are powerful, you need to start training early. They are very trainable since they like working for people.

### **Bully Breeds: Dog fighting & Baiting (Pit bull, Am Staff, American Bulldog, Bull Terrier)**

Throughout the world at some point or another dogs, have been used for dog fighting. This is a group of dogs with natural tenaciousness and strength. They can be gentle and affectionate with children and deadly to other dogs.

- Very powerful dogs.

- Strong predatory instinct.
- High dog aggression.
- Powerful bite (jaw power).
- Some of the most discriminated against breeds. Banned in areas, neutered, muzzled, and microchipped.

### **Nordic Dogs: Sled dogs**

Bred to pull sleds and transport their owners from place to place. Some also helped in hunting and herding. Very powerful dogs that love to pull. They also have been bred to work with other dogs.

- Very athletic dogs. These dogs can run.
- They need to problem solve as they are working, which makes them independent.
- They take care of themselves. If it is too cold, they dig a hole to lay in and protect themselves. They also dig a hole to cool themselves if it is too warm.
- Howlers, they tend to talk and howl. They are very vocal in training.
- Predatory aggression is strong in them. If not taught otherwise, they might hunt and kill a small animal.

### **Toys**

Toys were created for entertainment and companionship.

- Easily spoiled and hard to housebreak.
- Intelligent dogs.
- Not enough socialization and training as young dogs gives them a bad attitude towards people.
- Things to be aware of: housebreaking problems, aggression, barking, finicky eaters, shyness, hyperactivity.

### **Herding**

Created to work closely with people, think independently when necessary, work long hours, and control and move large animals, herding breeds are smart problem solvers. Some breeds use their eyes to control the herd, others use barking or biting.

- These dogs have chasing behaviors. Expect them to chase cars and bicycles. Movement stimulates some of them.
- Since these dogs are very intelligent, throwing the ball for them a few times a day is not enough. You have to exercise the body by throwing their ball and exercise their mind by giving tasks to work on.
- They might try to herd the kids in the house and do a little heel nipping.
- These dogs have a very high activity level. They work all day long. They might pace, spin, chase their tail or find something inappropriate to do.
- Barking is also a problem with these dogs since some of them use barking to herd.
- They are highly trainable.

### **Excellent breeds that are very difficult to find**

If you can find a breeder that still breeds to the standards and has good quality dogs:

American Cocker Spaniel, Doberman, English Springer Spaniel, German Shepherd Dog, Golden Retriever, Labrador Retriever

### **Low maintenance dogs & good w/ kids (can be left home while at work)**

Dogs that don't mind hanging out on the couch while you are at work, not highly active, or that can be good with kids:

Borzoi, English Cocker, French Bulldog, Greyhound, Pug, Bernese Mountain Dog, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Collie (not low maintenance dog, but good w/ kids), Newfoundland, Samoyed (not low maintenance dog), Standard poodle, Shih tzu (not good w/ kids, but low maintenance), Whippet (not good w/ kids, but low maintenance)

### **Dogs that can be very active**

These are dogs that have a high energy level and need to run. A walk around the block is simply not enough.

Bearded Collie, Boxer, Brittany Spaniel, Flat Coated Retriever, German Shorthair Pointer, Golden Retriever, Husky, Vizsla, Weimaraner.

### **Dog that can live in the city**

Basset Hound, Boston Terrier, Bullmastiff, Corgi, Standard Dachshund, Scottish Terrier, Shiba Inu, Chihuahua, Italian Greyhound, Japanese Chin, Maltese, Miniature Dachshund, Papillion, Yorkie.

### **Dogs that don't shed as much as others**

Airedale Terrier, Bichon Frise, Bouvier, Cairn Terrier, Chinese Crested, Miniature & Standard Schnauzer, Poodle, Portuguese Water Dog, Wheaten Terrier, West Highland White Terrier.

### **Dogs that can act like watchdogs**

These dogs don't necessarily back up their bark, but they do alert you of any activity on your property or at the door.

Great Pyrenees, Min pin, Pembroke Corgi, Pomeranian, Ridgeback, Sheltie

### **Dogs that I do not recommend for everyone**

These are dogs that need special handlers and care.

Akita, Pit Bull, Aussie, Basenji, Border Collie, Bloodhound, Sharpei, Chow, Dalmatian, Jack Russell Terrier, Lhasa, Rottweiler, Mini Doxi, Belgian Malinois, Afghan Hound, American Bulldog,

### **Questions you should ask a client, when you are trying to help them decide on a breed of dog.**

1. Why do you want a dog?
2. What traits would you like this dog to have?
3. What traits don't you want the dog to have?
4. Do you care if the puppy / dog is a purebred or a mix?
5. Do you prefer a puppy or an adult?
6. How much time do you want to spend on grooming your dog?
7. What kind of lifestyle do you have?
8. How much time will you be able to spend with your dog?
9. Do you have any children?
10. Where will you keep your dog at the house?
11. What kind of climate will the dog live in?
12. Do you have a dog or other pets at home?
13. What type of dogs have you had in the past?
14. What was your experience with the previous dog?
15. What plans do you have for training?
16. Price range for the puppy / dog?

Sited Sources: The perfect Match, by Chris Walkowicz. Wiley Publishing, Inc. The Atlas of Dog Breeds of the world, by Bonnie Wilcox, DVM & Chris Walcowicz. T.F.H Publishing. Paws to consider, by Brian Kilcommons & Sarah Wilson . Warner books, Inc.