



Angel Aussies

Australian Shepherd Information

Average sizes and life expectancy of the breed.

HEIGHT

20-23 inches (male)

18-21 inches (female)

WEIGHT

50-65 pounds (male)

40-55 pounds (female)

LIFE EXPECTANCY

12-15 years

Breed Traits & Characteristics

Affectionate With Family

VERY GOOD

How affectionate a breed is likely to be with family members, or other people he knows well. Some breeds can be aloof with everyone but their owner, while other breeds treat everyone they know like their best friend.

Good With Young Children

EXCELLENT

A breed's level of tolerance and patience with children's behavior, and overall family-friendly nature. Dogs should always be supervised around young children, or children of any age who have little exposure to dogs. And children should be taught how to be cognizant and respectful of dogs' boundaries.

Good With Other Dogs

VERY GOOD

How generally friendly a breed is towards other dogs. Dogs should always be supervised for interactions and introductions with other dogs, but some breeds are innately more likely to get along with other dogs, both at home and in public.

Shedding level

MEDIUM

How much fur and hair you can expect the breed to leave behind. Breeds with high shedding will need to be brushed more frequently, are more likely to trigger certain types of allergies, and are more likely to require more consistent vacuuming and lint-rolling.

Coat Grooming Frequency **WEEKLY**

How frequently a breed requires bathing, brushing, trimming, or other kinds of coat maintenance. Consider how much time, patience, and budget you have for this type of care when looking at the grooming effort needed. All breeds require regular nail trimming.

Drooling Level **MINIMAL**

How drool-prone a breed tends to be. If you're a neat freak, dogs that can leave ropes of slobber on your arm or big wet spots on your clothes may not be the right choice for you.

Coat Type **DOUBLE**

Canine coats come in many different types, depending on the breed's purpose. Each coat type comes with different grooming needs, allergen potential, and shedding level. You may also just prefer the look or feel of certain coat types over others when choosing a family pet.

Coat Length **MEDIUM**

How long the breed's coat is expected to be. Some long-haired breeds can be trimmed short, but this will require additional upkeep to maintain.

Openness to Strangers **MEDIUM**

How welcoming a breed is likely to be towards strangers. Some breeds will be reserved or cautious around all strangers, regardless of the location, while other breeds will be happy to meet a new human whenever one is around!

Playfulness Level **MEDIUM HIGH**

How enthusiastic about play a breed is likely to be, even past the age of puppyhood. Some breeds will continue wanting to play tug-of-war or fetch well into their adult years, while others will be happy to just relax on the couch with you most of the time.

Watchdog/Protective Nature **MEDIUM**

A breed's tendency to alert you that strangers are around. These breeds are more likely to react to any potential threat, whether it's the mailman or a squirrel outside the window. These breeds are likely to warm to strangers who enter the house and are accepted by their family.

Adaptability Level **MEDIUM HIGH**

How easily a breed handles change. This can include changes in living conditions, noise, weather, daily schedule, and other variations in day-to-day life.

Trainability Level**HIGH**

How easy it will be to train your dog, and how willing your dog will be to learn new things. Some breeds just want to make their owner proud, while others prefer to do what they want, when they want to, wherever they want!

Energy Level**HIGH**

The amount of exercise and mental stimulation a breed needs. High energy breeds are ready to go and eager for their next adventure. They'll spend their time running, jumping, and playing throughout the day. Low energy breeds are like couch potatoes - they're happy to simply lay around and snooze.

Barking Level**MEDIUM**

How often this breed vocalizes, whether it's with barks or howls. While some breeds will bark at every passer-by or bird in the window, others will only bark in particular situations. Some barkless breeds can still be vocal, using other sounds to express themselves.

Mental Stimulation Needs**HIGH**

How much mental stimulation a breed needs to stay happy and healthy. Purpose-bred dogs can have jobs that require decision-making, problem-solving, concentration, or other qualities, and without the brain exercise they need, they'll create their own projects to keep their minds busy -- and they probably won't be the kind of projects you'd like.

About the Breed

The Australian Shepherd, a lean, tough ranch dog, is one of those 'only in America' stories: a European breed perfected in California by way of Australia. Fixtures on the rodeo circuit, they are closely associated with the cowboy life. The Australian Shepherd, the cowboy's herding dog of choice, is a medium-sized worker with a keen, penetrating gaze in the eye. Aussie coats offer different looks, including merle (a mottled pattern with contrasting shades of blue or red). In all ways, they're the picture of rugged and agile movers of stock. Aussies exhibit an irresistible impulse to herd, anything: birds, dogs, kids. This strong work drive can make Aussies too much dog for a sedentary pet owner. Aussies are remarkably intelligent, quite capable of hoodwinking an unsuspecting novice owner. In short, this isn't the pet for everyone. But if you're looking for a brainy, tireless, and trainable partner for work or sport, your search might end here.

What To Expect When Caring For an Australian Shepherd

Owning a dog is not just a privilege; it's a responsibility. They depend on us for, at minimum, food and shelter, and deserve much more. When you take a dog into your life, you need to understand the commitment that dog ownership entails.

Health

Aussies are generally healthy dogs, and a responsible breeder will test breeding stock for health concerns such as hip dysplasia, epilepsy, cataracts and certain forms of cancer. An Aussie's ears should be checked regularly to remove foreign matter and avoid a buildup of wax, and his teeth should be brushed regularly.

Recommended Health Tests From the National Breed Club:

- Hip Evaluation
- Elbow Evaluation
- Ophthalmologist Evaluation

Grooming

In general, weekly brushing sessions will keep the Australian Shepherd's waterproof, double-layer coat looking its best. During shedding season, though, more work will be required. During this period an undercoat rake can be used every two or three days to remove the abundant dead hair, followed by a cleanup with the wire brush. Aussies often work and/or play outdoors, so it's not unusual for them to come in dirtier than they left. But unless they've gotten into a particularly messy situation, they require a bath only occasionally. As with all breeds, the Aussie's nails should be trimmed regularly.

Exercise

A high-energy, athletic dog, the Aussie needs a great deal of exercise on a daily basis. At minimum, he should have a large, fenced-in yard to run around in for at least an hour or two daily. Aussies bond closely with their owners and love to accompany them on long walks or, better yet, hikes. Once an Aussie leaves puppyhood behind, and his skeletal system is fully formed, he can make a great running companion. The best course, however, is to give the Aussie a job, whether that is herding livestock, shepherding children, or competing in canine events such as obedience, herding or agility trials, or dock diving.

Training

Early socialization and obedience training are both musts for the Australian Shepherd. One of the most frequent reasons Aussies end up in rescue situations is owners couldn't (or wouldn't) constructively channel the breed's boundless energy through training. Aussies bond strongly to their families and so can be territorial and overprotective of their owners' property, and they can become destructive if left without companionship for long periods too often. Fortunately, that loyalty combined with the breed's keen intelligence and high energy makes them very easy to train.

Nutrition

The Australian Shepherd should do well on a high-quality dog food, whether commercially manufactured or home-prepared with your veterinarian's supervision and approval. Any diet should be appropriate to the dog's age (puppy, adult, or senior). Some dogs are prone to getting overweight, so watch your dog's calorie consumption and weight level. Treats can be an important aid in training, but giving too many can cause obesity. Learn about which human foods are safe for dogs, and which are not. Check with your vet if you have any concerns about your dog's weight or diet. Clean, fresh water should be available at all times