

Labrador Retriever Expert Advice

Trainer

Labs thrive on guidance and training from an early age. A pup should start learning good manners from the first day he enters your household. Lab pups are like furry little information sponges, soaking up everything they see, hear, feel, smell and taste. They're learning something every waking moment, whether we're guiding and training them or not. - September B. Morn, professional dog trainer and author of several dog-related books, including *Training Your Labrador Retriever* (from *Popular Dogs: Labrador Retrievers*)

Veterinarian

"In addition to a hearty appetite, many Labrador Retrievers have a genetic tendency to put on pounds. So, it's really important for the general health of all dogs that they not be overweight, but Labs especially because of their predisposition to hip dysplasia and other problems." - Dottie LaFlamme, DVM, a veterinary nutritionist and Ralston Purina research fellow in St. Louis (from *Popular Dogs: Labrador Retrievers*)

Breeder

"I want to produce a dog that fits the standard; one that you wouldn't be ashamed to go into the show ring with, but is not necessarily fashionable. [The dog] should still be capable of doing what Labs were originally bred to do. Many of the dogs I breed are used for hunting and agility. And that's what I want - a dog that can do that. I want dogs that can do search-and-rescue work, function in guide dog programs and as Canine Companions for Independence programs. I want a dog that looks good but also has athleticism and trainability." - Marianne Foote, breeder and owner of Winroc Labrador Retrievers in Livermore , Calif. (from *Popular Dogs: Labrador Retrievers*)

Grooming

Because of their short hair, Labs are considered wash-and-wear dogs and require a minimum of grooming. But Labs do shed, particularly in the spring and fall. A good brushing once a week assists this process and spreads oils throughout the coat. Brushing also helps keeps Labs clean and brings a sheen to the coat. Even caked-on mud usually brushed right out once it has dried. - Kathy Salzberg, a National Certified Master Groomer and the former proprietor of the Village Groomer in Walpole , Mass. (from *Popular Dogs: Labrador Retrievers*)