

## Considering a Mastiff Breed

**Mastiff puppies need training and proper exercise from a prospective owner.**

*By Allan Reznik*

Q. I want to know about mastiffs, how long do they live? Are they a high-maintenance dog? Do they need a lot of exercise? Do they shed? I live in the city and have a fenced yard, but I am older.

A. There are several Mastiff breeds to consider. They all shed, drool (to a greater or lesser degree), and, as giant breeds, may not live as long as we'd like them to, although many breeders have made longevity a priority in their breeding programs.

Puppies grow quickly and so obedience training is a must. It is imperative that these strong and powerful dogs be under control, heel on leash, and obey basic commands, or they can be a liability to you as well as your neighbors.

The Bullmastiff makes a great city dog, and is "smaller" than the English Mastiff, Neapolitan Mastiff, etc., but we are still talking about a dog that could tip the scales at 130 pounds. Are you up to walking a dog of such size and strength? It's great that you have a fenced yard, but daily walks will do you both good, as long as the dog is not dragging you down the block. English Mastiffs and Neos can easily reach a weight of 150 to 180 pounds, and more.

Contact breeders and rescue groups to see if a more mellow and mature dog might be available to rehome with you. Such a dog will have had some basic training and might be a better fit for a senior than a more boisterous puppy.