

How Funny is Your Pup?

Get in touch with your dog's inner Seinfeld.

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When you think of dogs that tickle the funny bone, do the dogs from the funny pages, like imaginative Snoopy the Beagle and Marmaduke the pesky Great Dane come to mind? Well, real-life puppies (and adult dogs) can make us chuckle, too.

One Irish Water Spaniel, for instance, pulled an unforgettable clown-type stunt at a dog show. He deserted his spot in the obedience ring and joined the Afghan Hounds in the conformation ring next to it. The confident canine clown performed on cue for the judge and audience, and then he obediently returned to his appropriate place. Everyone was amused.

Countless other canine comedians act silly, like to have fun and make people laugh at them. This, in turn, may make you think, How funny is my puppy? Read on and find out.

Whether your puppy chases flies or sleeps with all four legs in the air, its sense of humor (or lack of one) can tell you what to expect in your present and future canine-human relationship. Just find the Typical Traits and Fun Style descriptions below, developed with the guidance of some animal behaviorists, that best describe your pups humor style.

Once you pinpoint what type of funny puppy you've got, let Stanley Coren, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia and author of *How to Speak Dog: Mastering the Art of Dog-Human Communication* (Free Press; 2000), help you to discover the advantages and disadvantages of your pups particular sense of humor. Canine Clown Typical traits: People-oriented, confident, social.

Fun style: Your puppy is a slapstick comedian. Think of the dog who runs into the living room carrying your underwear like it is a flag as you entertain company, says Mary R. Burch, Ph.D., a certified animal behaviorist of Tallahassee, Florida, and the director of the American Kennel Clubs Canine Good Citizen Program. Its canine clowns like these that make you want to laugh out loud.

Adds Atlanta, Georgia-based certified animal behaviorist John C. Wright, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, and author of *Misbehavin: The Groundbreaking Program for Happy, Well-Behaved Pets and Their People* (Rodale; 2001), The clownish behavior is something we all look for in a dog. It continues to be puppy-like even into adulthood.