

Herding Dogs as Pets

Fanciers explore whether herding dogs make good matches for pet owners.

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I get a lot of questions about the coat. The grooming required really depends on the dog's living situation. As a rule, this is not a high-maintenance dog. The breed is very resilient, able to adapt to an apartment in New York City or a 150-acre farm. It's early socialization and training that counts.

I do not sell [my] puppies to people who work all day, or to someone regularly gone more than six hours. Basically I listen to the situation, then match the inquirer with a breeder. If the person works, I send them to a breeder who works. So many Shelties are turned in to rescue or shelters because people didn't spend enough time with them and the dogs became shy and/or barkers.

Thank goodness we have such a great club and active rescue organization. People in this breed are very intense including many experienced owners of pet Shelties. Good-natured people with good-natured dogs!

Ann Bowes Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of America I probably get 30 to 40 inquiries a week. I'm constantly explaining that Pembrokes come in two coat varieties normal and fluffy, and that the fluffies are sold only for pets to be neutered never for breeding or show stock. The only difference between the fluffies and the normal coats is the coat length and texture. Health, temperament, etc. are the same.

The ideal home for a Pembroke has a stay-at-home mom with children who love to do things with their dog and are willing to learn how to groom and care for a dog properly. Corgis are the "do-it-all" dogs who love to be with their owners doing a job!

When talking with pet people it's important to not talk down to them. Many pet people are quite ignorant about dogs and need to be gently educated without turning them off. That way, you can make your point without angering them or making them feel inferior. Breeders can come across too strongly with questions and demands on the buyers. That attitude can send these buyers to pet shops or backyard breeders who will just sell them a puppy, no questions asked. I often get calls from pet people who want to breed their dogs to make money. That is a very tricky subject to deal with. Obviously dogs purchased at pet shops and from backyard breeders should not be bred, but the person who owns it thinks it's the most wonderful dog in the world. Sometimes even their vet has encouraged them to breed their dog!