

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. How big do they get?

A. Bigger than a St. Bernard; not as tall as a Great Dane, but heavier. The Mastiff standard sets the desired minimum height at the shoulder at 30" for males and 27 1/2" for females. The World Record for the largest dog is held by Zorba at 343lbs.

Q. How much does a Mastiff eat?

A. Probably not as much as you think. Pound for pound, the larger the dog, the less food it needs for each pound of body weight. Exactly how much food your dog should have depends on many factors including its size, age, and activity level. Feed your Mastiff a good quality, balanced diet - low on table scraps - and don't let him get too fat.

Q. Do they shed?

A. Yes, like most breeds they shed approximately twice a year. But, the short, sleek Mastiff coat is less objectionable when it sheds than the coats of many longer-haired breeds. A daily brushing will prevent accumulation of hair around the house.

Q. Do they roam?

A. No. A Mastiff of either sex is a stay-at-home dog. Learning to stay within property boundaries comes naturally. Nevertheless, when your Mastiff is outdoors without supervision, it's a wise precaution to protect him with a fenced enclosure.

Q. Are Mastiffs good guard dogs:

A. They are excellent family guards! They go to the door and bark, their hackles stand up, and they look formidable. But Mastiffs, as a breed, are not trigger happy. They have a gentle, rather than aggressive, nature which makes them unsuitable for guard or attack dog training. Nor are they suitable for "stake-out" dogs, because of their strong desire to be with their owners and family. Mastiffs need the company of their humans much more than some breeds of dogs do. A Mastiff left alone, tied out or kept in a fenced yard with too little human company, will either pine away or develop destructive behaviors out of loneliness and anxiety. Denied the needed time with its human family, a Mastiff may be much LESS protective because it isn't sure it belongs to that family.

Q. Are they easy to train?

A. Very easy. They are smart and they live to please. Seldom does a Mastiff need stronger correction than a stern voice.

Q. How are they with children?

A. Gentle and protective, providing they have been raised with children and are accustomed to them. Small children should not be allowed to play roughly with a puppy; Mastiffs are a sensitive breed that can be permanently traumatized by rough handling.

Q. Where should I buy a Mastiff?

A. Never from a pet shop. Never from a middleman who buys puppies from breeders, and resells them. The best way to get a healthy, happy, quality Mastiff puppy is to buy directly from the breeder. Reputable breeders put the welfare of their dogs and the improvement of the breed above the desire for financial gain. Reputable breeders will take back or replace a puppy who is found to have a congenital defect. Breeders who are members of the Pacific Northwest Mastiff Fanciers have agreed to abide by a Code of Ethics.

Q. How much exercise does a Mastiff need?

A. About as much as you do. Most Mastiffs are like most humans: they can manage a sedentary life without getting "hyper" - but, like humans, they reach a physical peak with a moderate degree of fitness.

Q. What are Mastiffs like in the house?

A. Clean, quiet, undemanding. Mastiff heaven is a rug beside his owners chair. Mastiffs are naturally clean, quick to housebreak, and once house-broken, generally foolproof. Most adult Mastiffs don't chew, and they don't get on the furniture with out an invitation.

Q. How long does a Mastiff live?

A. The average Mastiff life span is 7-10 years. A few have lived to be 13 or 14. A tiny handful have lived to be 16 or 17. Assuming no accidents, and individual dog's life span will depend on its bloodlines, weight, and freedom from significant problems such as blindness, heart disease, hip or elbow dysplasia, immune disorders, etc.

Q. What are Mastiffs good for?

A. Mastiffs excel as companions, family members, therapy workers and as watch dogs. Mastiffs have also done well, when properly trained and conditioned, at carting, tracking, obedience, conformation showing, search and rescue, and weight pulling. They are also great foot warmers and couch potatoes!