

PUPPY LOVE SHELTIES

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ORIGIN & HISTORY

The “Sheltie” or Shetland Sheepdog was bred in the Shetland Islands off of the northern coast of Scotland. The Shetland Islands are very damp and cold offering a very harsh living to its inhabitants (human & animal). The small “Shetland Pony” was developed to fill the needs of the locals along with cattle & sheep of compact size. A small dog was in turn needed for herding and keeping the cattle and sheep out of the gardens. The shepherds needed a dog that was small, hardy, courageous, intelligent and resilient, who's double coat would protect them from the extreme cold and stormy weather on the islands. The “Sheltie” was originally called a “Toonie” (town) or “Peerie” (fairy) dog. In the early years, breeds such as the “Greenland Yakki” and “King Charles Spaniel were bred into the “Sheltie” along with show type “Collie” of the day. Many of the “faults” found in show dogs are the result of these cross breedings.

In 1908 the “Shetland Collie Club” was formed in Lerwick, and a year later the “Scotch Club” was formed. There was much dispute as to description and size for the new breed. In 1914 the “English Shetland Collie Club” was started and shortly thereafter the name of the breed was changed to the “Shetland Sheepdog” due to complaints about the “Collie” name being in the breed name. The first import of “Shelties” to the United States came in 1910, and the American Shetland Sheepdog Association was formed in 1929 with the set by it in place until 1952, and further revisions made in 1959 when the size standard of 13” to 16” for either sex was put into place.

THE SHELTIIE AS A PET

As stated in the Official Standard for the Shetland Sheepdog - the “Sheltie” is: ...intensely loyal, affectionate, and responsive to its owner. However, he may be reserved toward strangers but not to the point of showing fear (note that puppies often go through a “fearful” stage at 10 to 16 weeks) or cringing... It should be noted that some “Shelties” have a

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preponderance toward barking (you can have your dog “de-barked” by a veterinarian if this becomes too big a problem - most “show dogs” of this breed have been “de-barked”).

“Shelties” do shed their long outer coat and shorter undercoats throughout the year with more shedding occurring in hot weather or after a female is weaned from a recent litter. “Shelties” do require regular brushing and as an adult a “slicker brush” should be used.

Your puppy will need a great deal of socialization - particularly in the first 18 months of its life. They should be exposed to new sights, sounds, smells and people both at home and away in order to boost its self-confidence. Even a small puppy should be walked and not carried so it can experience the world from ground level.

“Shelties” are very adaptable to an array of living situations. They do well with many other dogs, cats and other animals, and can live in an apartment, in a home or on a farm. They do well in a single owner as well as in a family setting.

The “Sheltie” seems to have the ability to enrich the lives of children and senior citizens. They seem to possess an innate caring and sensitivity blended with a sense of humor. In the same vein, their high willingness to please makes them excellent companions who enjoy the gentle stroking of a loving owner.

PREPARING FOR YOUR “SHELTIE”

There is little that compares with bringing home a new puppy! You do need to think about where your new puppy is going to sleep and eat, and where you will keep its toys and chew bones? What special area outside your home will be fenced or designated for “potty Training” and where will you be able to safely play with your puppy away from hazards and distractions. One more thing you will need to do is find a veterinarian that you are comfortable with (don’t forget you will need to get vaccinations for your puppy, one every 3 to 4 weeks until 16 weeks old).

It is a known fact that puppies begin to “imprint” at seven to eight weeks of age. Whatever conditions and people they are exposed to at that time make a lasting impression on them. It is imperative to bring your puppy home as close to this time as possible. Puppies go through a developmental “fear” period at about 12 weeks of age, therefore, that is NOT a good time for a puppy to have the stress of going to a new home

and owner. Puppies also go through a high stress period from about 4 months to 6 months of age due to teething. Not every dog experiences these changes at the same time or to the same level - but most do.

“Sheltie” puppies should be introduced to friends and other family members slowly and on their own terms. Times of year such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter or other hectic times can be stressful on a puppy.

CLOSE SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN IS A MUST! THEY SHOULD ONLY BE ALLOWED TO PICK UP THE PUPPY IF THEY ARE SEATED AND SHOULD BE TOLD NOT TO DROP THE PUPPY! The puppy **MUST** be held securely and put down on the floor carefully. Remember that puppies tend to squirm and frequently will try to jump from high elevation - they have not yet developed any fear or sense of distance or height.

Play periods are **VERY** important and will lead the way toward establishing successful bonding and a good rapport. Quiet rest periods and naps are also **VERY** important for good health.

When your household quiets down for the night most puppies who are newly separated from their mother and litter mates will whine and cry for them. You might consider having your puppy sleep in its “crate” in your bedroom for 1 or 2 night. This closeness sometimes soothe, comforts and quiets a young puppy’s insecurities.

For a normal sleeping area you should choose a quiet and out-of-the way, clean, dry and draft free area in your home. A puppy needs a place to get away from the normal household goings-on, if it chooses. **DO NOT BANISH YOUR “SHELTIE” TO A BASEMENT, GARAGE OR BACKYARD** as they do not do well if they are not part of the family’s daily social structure. In the beginning it is **NOT** a good idea to use a “wicker” basket or bed for your puppy as it will chew on the wicker and could swallow a splinter. **Ideally the VERY BEST BED IS A DOG CRATE** along with a blanket, towel or pillow! Keeping your puppy in a crate also helps dramatically in housebreaking as a dog instinctively prefers not to soil its bedding. Also if you are going to travel by car with your puppy, a crate gives it some safety along the lines of a seat belt for humans.

FEEDING

“Shelties”, as most breeds of dogs, thrive on structure and routine. Feeding at regular times daily is a must. This routine, coupled with “crate training” is one of the biggest aids in housebreaking. Food and water dishes (like its bed) should be in an accessible yet out-of-the-way location.

When your puppy is brought home (normally between 6 and 10 weeks of age), it should be kept on the same food it was weaned on to. If you choose to change its diet you should do so gradually, introducing the new food into the present food while decreasing the original food over a 1 to 2 week period. Any sudden change will cause stress on the puppy's digestive system with the results being the possibility of vomiting, gastritis, and **DIARRHEA!** A good way to slow down diarrhea in a puppy is to give it a tablespoon of "cottage cheese", two or three times a day until the diarrhea slows down. You can also give an eyedropper full of "Pepto-Bismol" or "Kaopectate" that has been diluted, 2 or 3 times a day. If the diarrhea persists - **SEE YOUR VETERINARIAN!**

Puppies (and adults) should eat "hard" kibble type dog food. Nutritionally it is better for them and it is **FAR BETTER FOR THEIR TEETH!** Eating the hard food helps loosen the "baby" or "milk" teeth, exercise the gums, and speed up the tooth shedding process in puppies (note - you will probably not find any of the "milk" or "Baby" teeth as they normally get swallowed and go through the digestive system). The following is a **GENERAL** feeding schedule that you may want to use (check with your vet for his recommendations):

FEEDING SCHEDULE			
AGE	7am	Noon	5pm to 10pm
weaning to 3 months	*	*	*
3 to 6 months	*	*	*
6 months and over		*	*

Don't overfeed. Obesity is a health hazard. **DON'T EVER FEED TABLE SCRAPS.** It teaches bad behavior and the scraps do not have what the dog needs in the way of nutrition! **NEVER GIVE YOUR DOG POULTRY or PORK BONES** as they splinter and can cause throat or intestinal damage!

RIDES IN THE CAR

Puppies should be given frequent **SHORT** car rides to get used to the motion and noise of travel. Some dogs adjust to car travel right away - some never do. You can check with your veterinarian about medication for nausea for your pet.

GROOMING

The “Sheltie” will normally get his full adult coat at around 2 years of age. When grooming an adult “Sheltie”, the coat should be damp (spray the coat with a spray bottle filled with water to get the coat damp). Brushing a dry coat will cause damage to the hairs. A “pin” brush will work fine for your puppy but as an adult you will need to use a “slicker brush” to do a good job on its coat. The best way to groom your “Sheltie” is to do what is called “line brushing”. In “line brushing” you lay the dog on its side (on the floor works good). Begin at the nap of the neck, part the hair to the skin and brush the coat upwards and out. Part the coat again just below the line you have just finished and repeat the brushing. Continue until you have reached the dogs shoulder. Now move onto the body doing the same style of brushing. When one side is finished you can turn the dog over and repeat the process on the new side. When you have finished both sides you can touch up the coat to get a GREAT looking “Sheltie”. Remember that some “Shelties” are prone to “matting” behind the ears and you may have to give extra care in brushing that area.

We hope that tis answers all of your questions, but you ever need to call us about something - please, don't hesitate - we are here for you! If we are gone, it might take a few days for us to get back to you BUT WE WILL!