

## **Character of the Pembroke Welsh Corgi**

The secret to the character of any breed of dog lies in the function for which she was created. The Pembroke Welsh Corgi is no exception—as you might expect from a herding breed, the Corgi is sensitive, highly intelligent and very keyed to her people. When you look at this short, solid 25-28 pound dog bred to move tons of cattle to Welsh markets, protect the homestead and police vermin, you will see a tough, clever dog with the muscle and brains to do her job, as well as be a high companionable member of the family.

It has been joked that a Corgi is "a dwarf German Shepherd," and their keen intelligence, trainability, determination, and adaptability would support that. But the Pembroke Welsh Corgi has a charm and sense of humor all her own; one of her jokes is to convince people that she is a lap dog!! Although she can be sweet as pie, a lap dog she is not, and without firm, fair training, she will take over your household, laughing the whole time.

Corgis are energetic optimists and today are found working on farms and ranches, in hospitals as therapy dogs, as hearing ear dogs and assistance dogs for the handicapped. Some are even known to retrieve birds, but most are cherished as loyal family members. The long and short of it is that a Corgi is a fantastic dog for those who want a real companion, but could be a mistake for those who desire an ornament for living room or garden. She is thoroughly capable of creating her own amusement and her lively wit is best channeled into constructive play and/or work.

### **General**

Handsome and distinctive, the Pembroke Welsh Corgi is a low-set dog with a sturdy body and short legs. Her head is rather fox-like in appearance, but with a sweet expression. The Corgi has moderate length, being a trifle longer than she is tall. She is not as square in outline as

a terrier or as elongated as a Dachshund. Her tail is short and her coat sweeps back to form long pants in the rear. Her coat should have a bit of coarseness with a good thick undercoat. The coat should not be stiff, wiry, or excessively soft and silky. Pembrokes have an all-weather coat, showing special resistance to water.

The Pembroke Welsh Corgi is essentially a healthy breed, but there are some problems of which the future owner should be aware. Ask a breeder regarding:

- Certain hereditary disorders like hip dysplasia and eye disorders are possible, but can be tested for.
- Von Willebrand's disease (VWD) has been recognized in Corgis. The disease is an inherited bleeding disorder similar to hemophilia.
- Some Corgis are prone to urinary tract problems. Urine sediment that in more severe cases leads to stone formation can be responsible for recurrent bouts of cystitis or bladder inflammation.

### **Grooming**

The Corgi's grooming needs are minimal. A regular once or twice a week combing will usually keep her coat in top form, except in shedding seasons when a free fall of loose hair can make you wonder how all that fur can come from such a small dog!! (More frequent combing, however, can keep the shedding under control.)

Nail trimming is a must for most Corgis. Ideally, nails should be trimmed once a week to keep the quick in the nail well back.

### **Is a Corgi Right for You?**

If you are considering the purchase of a Pembroke Welsh Corgi, please consider all aspects of the decision. All breeds have their positive and negative points—please be sure

that you are prepared to deal with both the good and the bad.

**Corgis do shed** . . . While it is easy to sweep or vacuum, it's hard to brush off. So if you are bothered by dog hair, or unwilling to groom the dog and perhaps vacuum a bit more often, you may be unhappy with a Corgi. Also, if there are allergies in your family, a shedding dog may be a problem.

**Corgis need exercise** . . . They need perhaps more exercise than those short legs would suggest; daily walks and some vigorous play are necessary for her to keep her figure.

**Corgis with children** . . . Some Corgis can be marvelously patient and gentle with children, others may be too vigorous to recommend them for families with small children. Much depends on the individual temperament of the dog, the training she receives and the lines she is bred from . . . all which makes the selection of the right dog crucial.

**Corgis are herding dogs** . . . It must be emphasized that Corgis were bred for herding, and this herding tendency is likely to appear when a dog is playing with a child (or an adult, for that matter). When a child does a lot of running in play, a Corgi may very well try to herd and nip at the ankle. This doesn't mean the dog has turned mean, it's just the appearance of an innate tendency.

**On the positive side** . . . The Pembroke Welsh Corgi is generally not a destructive dog, is naturally clean, house trains very easily and is an alert, courageous watch dog. An energetic dog, they are not prone to the perpetual motion of many other small dogs, and with proper care, exercise and training can adapt to almost any lifestyle. Corgis are wonderful, intelligent, loyal companions and excellent family dogs. They are sensitive to human moods and do their best to cheer up their gloomy human friends. Corgis are a great deal of fun for the whole family and quickly become family members.