



Basenjis

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The Basenji Dog

About the Basenji Dog

Basenjis make excellent pets given the right environment; they are alert, affectionate and possess a strong desire to please their owners. They are small, unusual, elegant, athletic dogs that are about the size of a fox terrier. Because the Basenji sheds little to no hair, it makes a wonderful companion for those suffering with allergies. The Basenji does not bark, however, it does have some very unusual vocalizations; he may yodel, howl, growl or crow, depending on his mood. As with any decision that will have a long term impact on your life, it is important that you make an informed decision when choosing a pet. The purpose of this informational eBook is to introduce you to the Basenji and the characteristics unique to this breed. We will touch on adoption versus engaging a breeder and trace a few key points that are important to note in each stage of your dog's life, from bringing home your new pup to making him or her comfortable in their elder years. Our hope is that you will come away from this book with a number of helpful tips and pieces of advice. This complimentary book is packed full of information to fulfill your dog parenting needs. You will be given access to checklists and handy vet tips to ensure you are taking proper care of your loved animal. We will even provide you with beautiful pictures of these lovely well-mannered dogs. Take a few moments to enjoy this information and you will spend many years enjoying a loving relationship with your Basenji.

General Basenji Characteristics

The Basenji has a smooth shiny coat of copper, red, black and tan or black and brindle; usually with white feet and white on the chest and tip of the tail. Individuals may also sport a white facial blaze, white legs and/or a white collar. The back is level; the legs are long, and the forehead is furrowed with wrinkles, giving it a worried look. The ears are straight and open in the front and its tail is set high and curls up over and slightly to either side of the back. Its eyes are small and almond shaped. Its thighs are muscular, and it has a flat skull. The breed has a distinctive, horse-like running gait. Basenji's range in size from 15 to 17 inches and range in weight from 20 to 26 pounds, depending on whether you choose a male or female companion.

The Basenji is alert, affectionate, demanding, energetic and curious. It loves to play and makes a good pet, as long as it is handled regularly from an early age. It is very intelligent, responds well to training with a strong desire to please. The Basenji dislikes wet weather. They like to chew, so giving them lots of toys of their own would be a good idea. The breed likes to climb and can easily get over chain wire fences. Basenjis are very clever at getting their own way, they succeed less by obstinacy than by charm. It has the unique properties of not barking (it makes a low, liquid ululation instead) and of cleaning itself like a cat. It can be described as speedy, frisky, and tireless at play. Their strong desire to play can lead to behavior problems if left alone. Most Basenji problems usually involve a mismatch between owner and pet. If the owners mistake the adjective "quiet" to mean inactive instead of noiseless, they become harassed by an active, though relatively silent, dog. This breed will do okay in an apartment if it gets enough exercise; it is very



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active indoors and a small yard will suffice. It does need daily vigorous exercise though; Basenjis have a tendency to become fat and lazy, unless the owner is consistent about it.

Selecting Your Basenji Puppy – Adoption or a Breeder?

It is usually a matter of personal preference when it comes to adopting a dog or choosing to seek out a breeder that is familiar with your breed.

A few words about adoption:

Look for a pet adoption shelter or rescue center in your community. Use your community resources such as your library, newspaper, and any online information to understand the reputation of the shelter before you go there. Take time when selecting the shelter or rescue group you will adopt from and ask questions of other people who may have used their services before. Pay visits to each of the shelters and rescue groups you are considering, and speak with the staff and volunteers about their organization and the pet or pets that you are interested in. Also inquire as to whether or not the rescue has a foster parent program that will let you bring the pet into your home for several weeks to see how it will fit with your current living situation. In any case, before making a final decision, find out as much as you can about the history of the pet you are considering. Go into adoption knowing that some pets are up for adoption, because they have been left behind due to divorce or families having to relocate. Not all pets in shelters or rescue centers come from abused or neglectful situations. Pet adoption or rescue is less expensive than purchasing from a dog breeder and for families who face economical challenges, this option is worth considering.

A few words about breeders:

Perhaps you prefer a Basenji that comes from a reputable breeder in order to raise your pet as a show dog or breed your pet to further the advancement of new Basenjis in your community. Breeders are very knowledgeable about the breed's overall health and characteristics. You can find dog breeders by looking in the newspaper, searching on the internet, or checking with the local vet. Make sure the breeder is associated with the AKC. Dog breeders can be very particular about the person wanting to purchase the dog. They may want to know what other animals are in the home, if you have a yard for the dog to play in, or if there are any children living in the home. Make sure the breeder's facilities are clean, and always ask to see the mother and father of the puppy you want to buy. The breeder should be able to provide a written health guarantee and all shot records.

Either option is viable based on your own knowledge, expectations, and personal conviction. The most important thing to remember when selecting your pet is to select the pet that is right for you.



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EXPERT TIP

Selecting a Crate

A dog should be able to stand and turn around inside a closed crate. If you have a Basenji dog or puppy, consider the average height and weight of an adult Terrier, and choose a crate based on those specifications. .

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How to Choose Your New Basenji Pup

Choosing a dog can be a difficult decision because there are many different personalities and aesthetic qualities you may want to look for. Do you prefer to have the runt of the litter or the huskiest brute? Or, would you prefer a kiss of white sugar on the tips of your pup paws? Are you keener on a specific color combination? Sometimes you can make a decision based on the adorable facial expressions a pup makes. Can you resist those sweet puppy dog eyes that pierce right through to clench hold of your heart? Pet adoptions or rescues are viable options for selecting your Basenji. Of course, finding a good breeder is always a good option too. Make sure you look for the following signs of a healthy dog:

- Bright and clear eyes
- Clean ears that are free of parasites
- Healthy coat and skin conditions
- History and lineage are necessary as the genetics of animals are much like that of humans
- Make sure paw pads are soft and well taken care of
- Plump bellies are common in healthy puppies, but be sure they're not too plump
- Tails and facial expressions can give strong clues about the pup's personality and disposition

Before You Bring Your Basenji Home

It is important to puppy proof your home and be as prepared as possible to provide a safe and secure environment for your new friend. In an effort to prepare for the care of your new best friend you should create a checklist and learn about the special needs of your pet. Make sure that your floors are free of clutter. This includes shoes and electric cords, as puppies like to chew. Use the rule "out of sight, out of mind" when introducing your puppy to his new environment.

Create a list of items that you need for your new pet. You will need the essentials to care for your pet such as, a good puppy food, a brush for grooming, toys for playtime, and crates or kennels for containment. Puppy pads and treats or other training products will come in handy as well. You will also want to have a selection of toys and training items. The reward system is great for teaching your pet important lessons. Some toys double as treat holders so that when playing games with your pet they have a fun way to get to their reward. Your pup will soon discover what you want from him if you use a loving manner to convey your messages. Although occasionally aloof, Basenji's are eager to please and quick studies; they respond well to positive reinforcement.

It is really important to start your pup with a good health regimen. Keep accurate health and immunization records throughout the life of your pet. This will make it much easier for you to maintain proper health standards for your



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animal. Be sure to introduce him early to his vet and his grooming process. These are good practices for new owners as well as the pups. Of equal importance is a healthy diet for your pet. It is a good idea to follow your breeder or vet's guidelines for all of your pet's nutrition needs. Puppy food has different nutrients than adult or senior foods. Allergy sensitive animals require special dietary ingredients as well. Being prepared is the most important aspect of introducing your new family member to his or her new environment. Purchase books about your breed, ask questions of the breeder and your vet, and read about your pet online or at your community library. Pay attention to the details for true success and your new family member will make a quick and happy adjustment to his new home.

Your Basenji through the Years

Your Basenji Puppy

Each stage of your pet's life will be characterized by special needs. Puppies' lives are full of learning experiences. Enjoy the time you spend with your puppy. Use chew toys, or balls to keep your puppy active and know that you can use these toys not only to play but also to train your pet. Puppies learn quickly and can develop bad habits if they are not properly stimulated. Conversely, they can learn good habits if trained lovingly and early on.

Healthy habits are established at this stage of life as well. Vaccinations, dietary standards, and proper grooming regimens are very important for puppies. Your Basenji should have its own clean bowls for food and water. Sometimes it is helpful to place the bowls on a non-slip surface. There are many decorative bowls and placemats available to make your pets feeding time special for him. Take extra time to get your pup used to regular grooming. Use shampoos, nail clippers, brushes, and toothbrushes to keep your pup shiny and squeaky clean. When you introduce a new grooming device to your puppy it is important to remember to let the pup become acquainted with the item before using it. Remember to put the item away when you are no longer using it or the pup might mistake it for a toy.

Your Basenji Adult

As your dog begins to age, his needs begin to change. Keep surprises to a minimum by, yep you guessed it, being prepared. Keep your dog active and healthy. Change out his toys often to keep his interest. Sometimes adult dogs develop allergies. If you notice changes in the skin, or fur you may need to change their diet. If your pet develops allergies you will see changes in his coat, skin, eyes or ears. If you suspect your dog has allergies, the best thing to do is take your dog to the vet. There are excellent remedies that will become an important part of your dog's routine.

As your dog ages his nails, paw pads, coat, skin, eyes and ears need special



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attention. Make grooming a happy time for your dog. You should keep the coat clean and free of dander, fleas, and tangled or matted hair. Also keep nails trimmed, check the pads on their paws frequently for spurs, and keep tooth tartar under control. Keep up with all of your adult pet's needs by frequently checking supplies and making sure that you have the most efficient tools handy to keep your dog in good health.

Your Basenji Senior

When your pet climbs the hill into his senior years his needs will change again. Dietary changes are the most prevalent at this life stage. As your dog ages, so does his digestive system. Make sure your senior Basenji maintains a proper diet and receives proper nutrients by starting him on a daily vitamin. Keep abreast of the latest trends in dental products. There are many tartar control products on the market today. There are bones, toys, and toothbrushes essential to older dogs' health and happiness. This particular breed is prone to Fanconi's syndrome and also susceptible to progressive retinal atrophy, intestinal and eye problems. You may want to provide a more appropriate sleeping and lounging area for your pet, or an orthopedic dog bed. Maintaining a regular exercise routine and proper diet may help ward off aching hips and elbows. Remember that dog's age in some of the same ways that humans do. You can help them manage aches and pains with the proper pet healthcare aids, knowledge, and care.

Senior pets have many changes in disposition and could easily be stressed by active young children. They may show signs of irritability when eating or when encouraged to do something they would rather not do. Basenjis are genuinely lovable animals and are not known to cause harm, but grumpy seniors have a way of making sure that you are aware when they are unhappy. It is important to know that senior animals tend to do things their own way and in their own time. Care for your senior in a loving, gentle manner mixed with a little patience and understanding.

Most importantly, remember to cherish the special moments with your pet and keep them close to your heart. Display pictures of your dog around your home or office. Develop family traditions that include your pet; some families even hold birthday parties, specifically for their Basenjis.

Basenji Medical Considerations

Although a relatively healthy breed, there are a few conditions to watch for in your Basenji.

- Fanconi's Syndrome – in this disease the renal tubes of the kidneys fail to properly absorb nutrients; it is treatable if caught early.
- IPSID (Immunoproliferative Small Intestine Disease) – the dog is not able to properly utilize the nutrients from food; this causes weight loss and diarrhea.
- Hemolytic Anemia – a condition where the red blood cells break up, resulting in fewer red blood cells.



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- Hip Dysplasia – a progressive, deteriorating problem in the ball-and-socket joint of the hip whereas the ball does not fit and move efficiently in the socket.
- PRA (Progressive Retinal Atrophy) – a slow, progressive deterioration of the retina which can lead to blindness.
- Juvenile Cataracts – a cataract of the eye that forms within the first few years of life.
- Luxated Patella (Slipped Stifles) – a disease in which the kneecaps slip out of the groove. Only the hind legs are involved and can affect one or both legs.



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