



# Bearded Collie

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# The Bearded Collie: From Youth Through the Golden Years

## Introduction

The Bearded Collie, also known as "Beardie" is a medium sized, agile, herding dog with a shaggy coat and an ever wagging tail. This breed makes an excellent family pet; their temperament is friendly and playful; they are enthusiastic, stable and self-confident.

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 Bearded Collie 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 dogs 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 and 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 Bearded Collie.

## General Bearded Collie Characteristics

The Bearded Collie has a broad head, short muzzle and a shaggy coat all over his body, even under the chin (hence the name "Beardie"). Beneath the dense, weatherproof outer coat lies a thick, soft undercoat. Its head and teeth are large. The eyes are wide set and harmonious in color with its coat, set high on its head and pendent. The ears lie close to the head and the tail is long and carried low unless the dog is excited. The Beardie is robust, hardy and active, but not massive. The color of the coat changes several times over the life of the dog. Puppies are generally born black, brown, fawn or blue. The puppy coat then fades to light gray or cream. As the dogs reach maturity, they darken again to their adult coat in any of the four colors, black, brown, blue, or fawn. The final coat color is somewhere between the puppy coat and the yearling coat. They vary in height from 20 to 22 inches and weight from 40 to 60 pounds.

Known for his "bounce," the exuberant Bearded Collie will charm you with his joyous, affectionate, happy-go-lucky ways. The perfect companion for children, they are playful, lively and have an ever wagging tail. Males tend to be more bold and outgoing, while females tend to be calmer and more submissive. The Bearded Collie needs to be with people and not left alone without anything to do. They are humorous and high-energy dogs. Very trainable for many activities, obedience training is a must. This breed thinks a lot and can be headstrong at times; it is a natural herder of people and animals. They are noisy barkers, but are not watch dogs. They should not be shy or aggressive.



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The Bearded Collie is not recommended for apartment life as they are fairly active indoors and will do best with at least an average-sized yard. They can sleep outdoors and make excellent farm dogs. They are also good in windy, rugged or wet areas since these dogs have no problem going out in any kind of weather – rain or shine!! This breed prefers the great outdoors.

## Selecting Your Bearded Collie 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; you have the satisfaction of providing a home for a deserving pet.

### A few words about breeders:

Perhaps you prefer a Bearded Collie 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 Bearded Collies 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 breeders 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. Pet ownership is a big responsibility; select a pet that fits your lifestyle.



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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 Bearded Collie Dog puppy, consider the average height and weight of an adult Bearded and choose a crate based on those specifications. The average size of an adult Bearded Collie Dog is 15 lbs and 16 inches tall. Choose a sturdy steel or plastic crate for medium sized breeds such as the Bearded Collie Dog.

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## How to Choose Your New Bearded Collie 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 Bearded Collie. 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 Bearded Collie 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.

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 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

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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 Bearded Collie through the Years

### Your Bearded Collie 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 Basset 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 Bearded Collie 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 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 Bearded Collie 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 Basset 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. 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. Just remember that dog's age in



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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. Bearded Collies 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 Beardies.

### **Bearded Collie Medical Considerations**

The Bearded Collie is one of the few breeds that have almost no health issues. The only thing to watch for is hip dysplasia, which is a condition common in many breeds of dog. This is a condition which affects the ball-and-socket joint in the hip and prevents it from moving efficiently. If you notice your dog beginning to limp, it is important to have it checked by your veterinarian immediately.



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