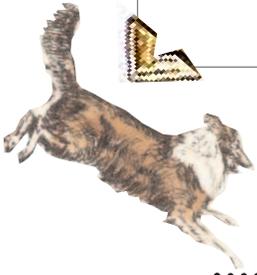


Photo © 2006 by Gillian Smith-Clark from her book, *Teddy's Girl*. For information on how to order, see *Resources*.



A Collie's love is forever



THE COLLIE IN YOUR HOME

Good tempered and gentle, the Collie is an easy dog to live with

The joy of owning a Collie is great: Whether as a loyal companion, a friend for the children, or a worker on the farm, the Collie brings to its family a love that is unconditional, generous and forever. But with this love and loyalty comes a lifelong responsibility on the part of the owners to their Collie's care and well being.



The Collie falls in the mid-range of responsibility when it comes to the practical concerns that influence the choice of a breed as a family dog:

Size & Manageability

As with many of the large breeds, the Collie tends to be a very gentle, laid-back dog. It is not mean-spirited or vicious by nature, making it easy to manage. Though both genders have similar personality traits, each Collie is a distinct "individual." Size is where the sexes differ:

- FEMALES are at least 22 inches tall at the shoulders and weigh 50-60 pounds as adults;
- MALES are at least 24 inches tall and weigh 60-75 pounds as adults.

The standard kennel crate used for Collies is about 23" X 27" X 36" and a dog bed is usually in the 36" X 48" range which are approximate indications of the amount of sleeping space the dog needs in the house as well as travel space in the car. Though a large dog, the Collie is built for endurance rather than brute strength. The responsiveness of character and the body style—the frame of the dog is light and the neck long—make the Collie a fairly easy dog to control.

Domestic Impact

Some people believe that the impact of a dog on a household depends solely on coat length and shedding and that these are the factors of primary importance in the choice of a breed as a family dog. Coat is actually a relatively minor part of the domestic impact of any dog and of the amount of time and effort that it takes to care for the dog.

Domestic considerations go beyond coat maintenance to include size of the dog, shedding, stuff tracked in by the dog, how the dog smells wet and dry, the tendency to chew, be destructive and knock things off low furniture, general demeanor around the house, ease of housebreaking, drooling, digging holes in the yard, and the desire



The Collie in all ways & all forms is a very adaptable breed



to roll in unpleasant things or wallow in water courses, which make frequent bathing necessary. Maintenance of a dog includes brushing, hair and nail trimming or clipping, bathing, and teeth and ear cleaning.

Cleanliness

Both varieties of Collie are double-coated dogs who do shed their undercoats at regular intervals, annually for adult males and approximately three times every two years for females. Otherwise, the dogs are extremely clean, quiet around the house and easy to maintain. Collies housebreak easily and are very fastidious in their personal habits. Even as puppies, they do not chew excessively. They are gentle on their toys, tending to carry them around rather than chew them up.

The feet are small, and the coat does not smell unpleasant even if wet. The erect ears ventilate well and are not prone to damp odors, nor do they require the constant maintenance of larger flopped over ears. Since the Collie's lips are tight-fitting, there is little drooling. Collies don't require very frequent bathing because they don't get deeply dirty when outside, nor do they like to roll in nasty things or dig. They prefer games of fetch, catching frisbees, playfully "herding" kids (and adults!), or activities such as Agility.

Regular coat brushing is necessary for both varieties of Collie as is the routine maintenance of teeth and toe nails which is the same for any breed. Collies are not a clipped breed. Cutting the body coat of a Rough Collie does not eliminate shedding. It is customary, however, to trim the hair on the feet and around the face and ears on Rough Collies. Occasional trips to a grooming shop can assist a Collie owner in coat maintenance. Some industrious owners even spin their Collie's shed fur: it makes one of the warmest yarns for knitting!

