

Congratulations on your new German Shepherd Dog!

Congratulations on your recent acquisition of a German Shepherd Dog. As an organization of more than 4,000 members, the German Shepherd Dog Club of America, Inc., includes breeders, fanciers, trainers, and handlers who devotedly support the breed. The majority of people who own or have owned a German Shepherd Dog will tell you that ownership is an experience they love, because of the loyalty and the affection given by their dog. Some say that ownership is one of the finest experiences of life.

Our members come from many places - the corporate world, technical scientists, laborers, doctors, farm-hands, students, soldiers, mechanics, housewives, actors, teachers, and editors. We are a group that is widespread and diverse. We all seek to help you enjoy your new pet to the fullest by providing you with some general and basic information.

German Shepherd Dogs originated in 1899, at Karlsruhe, Germany, because of the efforts of Captain Max von Stephanitz (the father of the breed) and others. By carefully breeding selected animals and keeping only the very best, this devoted group of German breeders brought into being the breed known as the German Shepherd Dog (Deutsche Schäferhunde).

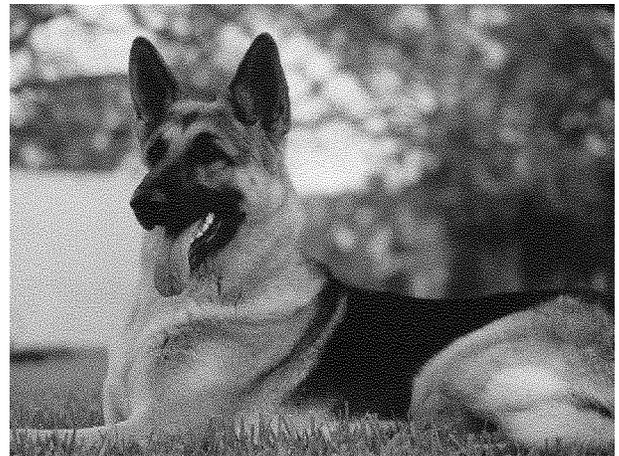
By 1905 the breed was making itself known throughout Europe and North America. In 1911 they were being registered as a separate breed, and in 1918 the German Shepherd Dog was listed by the American Kennel Club as a separate breed. In England, the breed was called "Alsatian." A movement by owners and breeders had the name changed in 1978. It is now known as the German Shepherd Dog in that country and throughout the world.

FUNCTIONS. The German Shepherd Dog is a dog whose original function was to herd and work. Because of its unique versatility, most families use the dog as a companion, pet for their children, or as an obedience or show dog. Today, it is also used as a service dog in search and rescue work, tracking, as a seeing eye dog, to herd sheep and cattle, as a guard dog or sentry, and in drug detection. The basic instincts of the breed lends itself to these multiple uses. The German Shepherd Dog is noted for its aloof, gentle, and loving disposition, making it an excellent breed for families with children.

The German Shepherd Dog's desire to please humans is legendary—making it a top obedience competitor and a first-rate companion dog for adults and children.

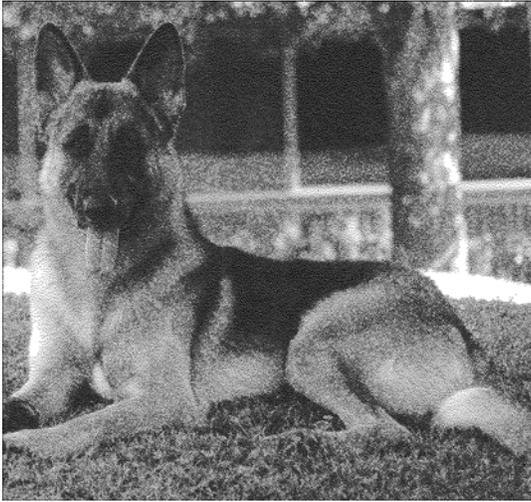
While the breed can adapt to virtually any living situation, they thrive best when they are given daily exercise which helps maintain

their physical and mental fitness. Your German Shepherd Dog should never be allowed to run free but should be confined to a fenced backyard or a kennel run. Keeping dogs tied or chained up is not in their best interest because they often become injured from these restraints. Without regular exercise, your German Shepherd Dog may become overactive and difficult to live with because of the pent-up energy that develops from confinement.



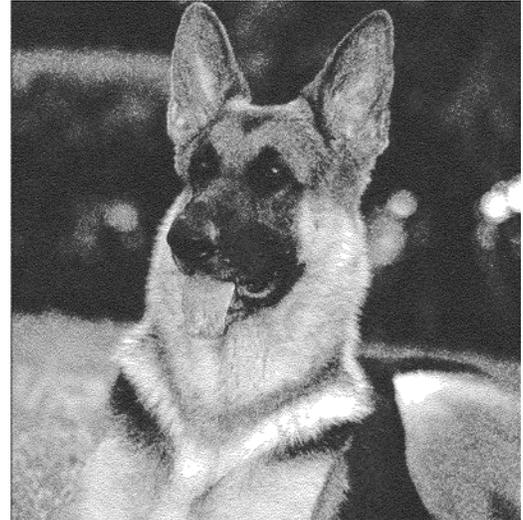
TRAINING. Basic obedience training is an essential part of responsible dog ownership. It will make your dog a better companion and will help establish a stronger bond between the two of you. Your German Shepherd Dog wants nothing more from life than to please you. Therefore, it is your responsibility to train this faithful companion to do as you wish. Training classes in obedience are available in most cities, offered by the local German Shepherd Dog Club or the All-Breed Kennel Clubs. Most have a listing in the newspaper. If none can be found, contact your local veterinarian or write to our office which is listed on the order form. We recommend these classes—ranging from puppy or kindergarten to adult and advanced obedience training. For the more serious owners, there are competition classes and dog shows. All are available in most areas of the country and are offered as a service by the local Specialty or Kennel clubs.

Most dogs will learn to obey if you use one syllable words as your commands—come, sit, down, no, etc. Dogs do not learn words but they do associate the sound of the command *sit*, with the behavior you want them to carry out. There are many good books, videotapes and training classes available to help you in this area.



The American Kennel Club permits spayed and neutered animals to participate in all phases of obedience, tracking, field work and junior handling, but not in most conformation classes at regular dog shows. Breeding dogs is a great responsibility that requires a significant investment of resources. Breeding and raising a litter involves a great deal of time to socialize the young puppies. The average litter size is 5 – 7 pups.

As one of the most popular breeds in the country, you will find that the German Shepherd Dog is well respected for its versatility. In fact, it is the breed preferred by those interested in search and rescue work, seeing eye, obedience or just as a good companion.



POPULAR QUESTIONS. One of the most frequently asked questions about the breed is: Should I train my dog for protection? This is more complicated than it may appear on the surface. Most dogs will become territorial and protective of their home and the place where their master lives. As your German Shepherd Dog matures, it will become more protective and will generally alert you when strangers approach. Teaching them to guard or protect you is not necessary. However, for those interested in the “Total Working Dog” concept, please contact our affiliate organization, GSDCA – Working Dog Association.

BREEDING. Before you consider using your German Shepherd Dog as a stud dog or brood bitch, remember that no dog with genetic problems should be bred. He or she should be certified free of hip dysplasia by an X-ray sent to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals. If your new puppy has parents that are OFA certified for their hips, their OFA numbers will appear on your dog’s AKC registration papers when you receive them from the AKC.

One of the best things you can do for your dog is to spay or neuter it unless you are a breeder or plan to show it. The basic disposition will not be changed by removing his or her reproductive capability and will not, by itself, make your pet obese or lazy.

Having a litter of pups is not in any way beneficial to a female and can occasionally lead to problems. Spayed bitches are often healthier and live longer than unspayed bitches. Neutered males cannot develop testicular cancer and have lower risk of developing prostate cancer. After neutering, most males will become more tolerant of other male dogs.

Much has been written about the German Shepherd Dog and there are many interesting programs offered to those who have an interest in sharing a common experience. The German Shepherd Dog Club of America, Inc., offers a free brochure to those interested in learning more about the breed. To order this and to learn if there is a regional German Shepherd Dog Club near you, complete and mail the order form in this brochure.



ORDER FORM

Please send me:

- ____ Brochure of information about the breed and the German Shepherd Dog Club of America, Inc.
- ____ List of German Shepherd Dog Clubs in my State
- For information about the GSDCA–Working Dog Association, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Joy Schultz, 732 Lindley Blvd, Deland FL 32774.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail order form to:

German Shepherd Dog Club of America, Inc.
Laura Gilbert
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Chesapeake, VA 23322
Email: GSDCAOffice@aol.com

For more information:

GSDCA Web Site: <http://www.GSDCA.org>

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