

Congratulations on Your New American Eskimo



You have done your research, made the decision, and now have your ball of white fur. Your American Eskimo will want to share all parts of your life. Whether it is long walks, weaving through the poles on an agility course, obedience trials, herding, or sleeping on your bed, your Eskie will be eager to join you. When exercising your dog, walk him on a leash or protect him with a fence. With proper care, your Eskie will be with you for twelve to fifteen years.

Breed History

The American Eskimo serves its master as an all round watchdog, escort, and family companion. The thick coat makes him resistant to all weather conditions. The breed was known as the “Spitz,” “Eskimo Spitz,” and “American Eskimo Spitz” before they became known as “American Eskimo Dog.”

During the 19th century, the breed was commonly found in communities of the German immigrants. It is believed, the American Eskimo is a descendant of the white German Spitz, white Keeshonden, or large white Pomeranians that immigrated with their European masters. In the late 19th century, the American Eskimo became extremely popular for use in trick acts many traveling circuses around the country. They excelled in this job because of their innate intelligence, trainability, unsurpassed agility, along with their sparkling white coats, and quickness.

The American Eskimo Dog Club of America was formed in 1985 and began registering dogs in 1986. In 1993, their registry was transferred to the American Kennel Club resulting in more than 1,750 American Eskimo Dogs being registered as foundation stock in the AKC Stud Book. In 1995, the American Eskimo Dog achieved total recognition by the American Kennel Club. The American Kennel Club recognizes the Toy, Miniature, and the Standard sizes.

Today

The American Eskimo is a highly intelligent, multi-purpose working breed with a versatility that is astounding. It is used as an able-bodied protector of the home, a guarder and herder of livestock, a therapy dog, and as a circus dog, just to name a few of its talents. Breeders are dedicated to not only preserve the breed’s fine qualities and natural instincts, but to steadily refine its attributes.

Breed Characteristics

The American Eskimo is a well-balanced, small to medium-sized dog that is agile, intelligent, and eager. In addition to these characteristics, the breed can be inventive, strong-willed, independent, territorial, and manipulative. Eskies are people-pleasers. Isolation from humans will quickly change their personality and general outlook. They thrive on family activities. It is up to you to make them constructive. Activities such as daily running, agility, herding, hiking, and other performance activities will help provide both the physical and mental exercises to keep your companion happy. Boredom is the source of many behavioral and training problems.

Care of Your American Eskimo

Plan a visit to your veterinarian promptly after acquiring your American Eskimo. Talk with your breeder and vet about the best choices in food and vaccination and worming schedules. Reputable breeders are concerned about the well being of the puppies and dogs they produce. They are an excellent source of information regarding the care and upbringing of your dog.



Keep plenty of fresh water available, changing it several times a day. A weekly brushing will help control shedding and keep their coats neat and free of mats. Attend to the nails regularly. You may enjoy learning to groom your own dog or you may prefer contacting a professional groomer to help maintain your dog in top condition. Talk to your breeder for tips on grooming.

The American Eskimo enjoys regular exercise. A securely fenced yard with an assortment of toys will help provide good exercise and stimulation to keep your Eskie out of trouble. Allow your dog to mature before allowing concentrated running. Wait until he is two years old so that his bones are hard enough to join you on your workout.

Training

The last sentence of the breed standard states that the American Eskimo Dog learns new tasks quickly and is eager to please. This is indeed the case with most Eskies. They will make an effort to do just about anything if it means they can be with their owner. They learn new commands with very few repetitions and often figure out how to do things by watching another dog or human. It can often be a challenge to stay one step ahead of such a clever dog. Eskies can run the gamut in drive and enthusiasm from couch potatoes that will only do things they must do all the way to dogs that are non-stop motion. In general, most Eskies can be persuaded to do almost anything with the right treat or toy.

A well-trained and socialized Eskie makes a wonderful companion. This doesn't happen by accident. All dogs require proper socialization as they are growing up to gain confidence in various settings to make them well-behaved adults.

It is a good idea to take your Eskie to training classes. Puppy training classes provide a head start on the training and socialization process. It is important to expose your puppy to different people, animals, sights, sounds, and experiences by taking him everywhere with you during his puppyhood. American Eskimo Dogs thrive on positive training. The result will be a well-adjusted adult dog that will be able to cope in a variety of environments with confidence. If your breeder cannot help you in locating training classes in your area, check the AKC Web site Clubs section (<http://www.akc.org/clubs/search/index.cfm>) or the CleanRun Web site club search section (<http://www.cleanrun.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=clubs.search>) for assistance in locating a club in your area. Attending training classes with your Eskie is not only an important part of your puppy's socialization process, it helps your puppy get some of the exercise s/he needs, and forms a closer bond between you and your new dog.



All dogs should be trained to use a crate. Your pet's crate should be a safe, desirable place for him to be when he needs to be left alone. The crate is also a great way to establish a routine especially during the housebreaking period. This is the safest way to protect your animal and your belongings when the dog is alone, unable to be supervised, or riding in a car. In fact, when you go on vacation, having a dog that is comfortable in a crate and can be fed in the crate will make taking your dog much more enjoyable.

Breeding

Unless you plan to breed your Eskie—an important decision that you should discuss with your Eskie's breeder first!—Be a responsible pet owner. Have your Eskie spayed or neutered. This will eliminate the possibility of a surprise litter. It will also help reduce your pet's chances later of mammary tumors or other forms of cancer.

Breeding is not a right—it is a choice and a major responsibility. At a minimum, test your dog for genetic disorders first. Your dog should be a good representative of the breed with regard to the breed standard and have a sound temperament. Go over the pros and cons with your dog's breeder, ask pertinent questions,



and understand the risks and potential joys. Breeding is, at the very minimum, a financial and social commitment you are making for the life of the puppies in the litter.

Health

Health is often an overlooked attribute. However, when looking at a breed with an average life expectancy of 15 years, it could be an important issue to consider. In general, the Eskie is a relatively healthy breed. That is not to say that the breed has no health issues. Late onset Progressive Retinal Atrophy and hip dysplasia are two problems known to occur in the breed. Tests are available for both of these issues to aid breeders in making choices to help reduce the risk of producing the problems. The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals has information on their Web site regarding hip dysplasia at www.offa.org. Optigen offers genetic testing for Progressive Retinal Atrophy (in particular, the PRCD form of PRA for Eskies) at www.optigen.com.

Safety

Help ensure the safety of your dog by permanently identifying them with a microchip. See the AKC Companion Animal Recovery program (CAR), www.akccar.org or 1-800-252-7894.

Additional Resources

For additional information on purebred dogs and events, see the American Kennel Club site, www.akc.org.

For breed specific information, see the American Eskimo Dog Club of America, Inc. site, www.aedca.org.

