

Norwegian Elkhound Dog of the Vikings



*Congratulations on your new
Norwegian Elkhound!*

The Norwegian Elkhound Association of America congratulates you on your newest family member, your Elkhound puppy. Formally organized in 1934, the NEAA is dedicated to the well being of this noble breed and wants to help you enjoy your new companion to the fullest by providing you with some basic information.

History

The Norwegian Elkhound is one of the ancient breeds of Scandinavia. As a hunting and guard dog for the Vikings, the characteristics and stature of the Elkhound have been passed on for generations resulting in the medium-sized, sturdy dog that we have today.

In Scandinavia the "Gra Elghund" or Gray Elkhound is indispensable for hunting bear and moose (elg). Elkhounds are not used to take down game, but to track, encircle and hold it until the hunter arrives. This effective hunting dog must have stamina to track over rough terrain for hours in all types of weather. The physical and mental traits that serve the dogs so well in this hunting style are vital to the essential Elkhound. Elkhounds were first imported to America in the early 1900's and a translation of the Norwegian standard was adopted in 1935.

General Appearance

The Norwegian Elkhound is a hardy silver-gray dog of medium size and substance, square in profile with distinctive saddle markings. Combined with upright ears, dark eyes, tightly curled tail and weather resistant coat, there is no doubt that the Elkhound is a solid, sturdy hunter.

Temperament

The typical Elkhound temperament is dignified, intelligent, independent, and, generally, friendly. Given the job that they were originally bred to do, the Elkhound must be a problem solver/thinker. This requires that an Elkhound's owner be persistent, consistent and creative when training a new puppy. Elkhounds are very people-oriented, and they do

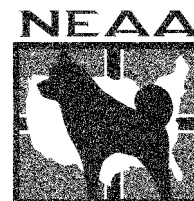
not like to be shut away from their family. They are excellent with children especially when introduced at a young age; however, as with any breed, children must be taught to treat the dog with respect. Very young children and dogs should never be left unsupervised.

Healthcare and Grooming

When you bring your new puppy or older Elkhound home, you should go to a veterinarian to have a basic health check. Recommendations from other dog owners or from your breeder will help you find a veterinarian with whom you feel comfortable and can communicate. The doctor will give your dog a general check up and set up an immunization schedule. Regular veterinary care, yearly vaccinations, good nutrition, and regular exercise are vital to maintaining your dog's good health.

Fortunately, Norwegian Elkhounds do not require elaborate grooming procedures. Their double coat does require extra attention during the twice-yearly shed. During these sheds, consistent brushing should take care of most of the fur. Since Elkhounds do not have a characteristic "doggy" odor, they do not need to be bathed weekly. However, a thorough bath with a good shampoo and regular brushing will usually keep your dog looking and feeling good. Also, don't forget those nails. Long nails are not good for any dog's feet. Your veterinarian can show you the proper type of trimmers and how to cut nails correctly.

Elkhounds and other double-coated breeds can be prone to follicular cysts, commonly referred to as sebaceous cysts. These cysts are formed when the normal pores in the skin become clogged. These clogged glands form pockets in which sebum accumulates. These pockets may remain encapsulated or may rupture. Your veterinarian can show you how to treat a ruptured cyst. While not a serious health issue, cysts are a nuisance. If you follow a good grooming protocol and feed a quality diet, you will help eliminate the problem.



Responsible Dog Ownership

A responsible Elkhound owner makes sure their dog is trained and supervised. A trained dog is a joy to own and a good neighbor. A supervised dog is not allowed to run at large, bark unnecessarily, or leave reminders of its presence in public areas. Owning an Elkhound requires a fenced yard or secure kennel run, basic obedience training, and love.

Training

Basic obedience training is the key to a well-adjusted dog. An Elkhound needs to know who's in charge. As with any intelligent breed, you must establish yourself as the leader of the pack. For an Elkhound this means training that is consistent, persistent, and, above all, fair. Remember, what may be a cute behavior as a puppy, may be totally unacceptable as an adult. Training will make your dog the companion that you desire and will establish a stronger bond between you and your elkhound. Classes - ranging from "puppy kindergarten" to advanced obedience training and competition - are available in most areas. Again, use your breeder and your veterinarian as resources.

To Breed or not to Breed

Breeding is a very serious responsibility. Elkhounds do have a few serious genetic defects: hip dysplasia (a malformation of the hip joint), hereditary eye problems, and renal defects. These defects can be passed on to puppies, and conscientious breeders do not knowingly breed dogs with hereditary defects. Beyond that, a serious breeder does not breed a dog or bitch that deviates significantly from the established breed standard for Norwegian Elkhounds. That standard covers all aspects of the breed including structure, appearance, and temperament. Another consideration is the major financial investment and time commitment involved with breeding a quality litter. With the number of animals that need to be rescued, breeding should never be considered on a whim.

The very positive alternative to an intact adult dog is to spay a female and neuter a male. The health benefits are great for both sexes and your veterinarian will be more than happy to discuss these with you. The basic disposition of your Elkhound will not be changed by spaying or neutering and will not, by itself, make your pet obese or lazy.

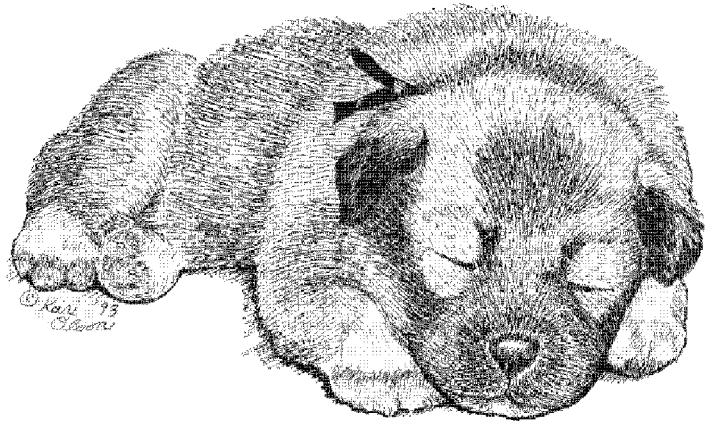
Further Information

For more information about your Elkhound, please visit the Norwegian Elkhound Association of America's web site at www.neaa.net. Here you will find information about membership, rescue, the breed standard, regional clubs and upcoming national events.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Norwegian Elkhound Association of America is to maintain the integrity of the Norwegian Elkhound breed as the hunting dog of moose in Norway in the following ways:

- * To provide those people who breed Norwegian Elkhounds with the knowledge to do so in a quality manner
- * To seek the continuous improvement of the breed by adhering to the breed standard created by the Association with the approval of the American Kennel Club
- * To oversee the regional clubs in promoting and protecting the breed and to assist these clubs in their missions and educational pursuits
- * To develop, promote, and disseminate educational information regarding the Norwegian Elkhound
- * To sponsor national events to monitor the progress of the breed and to demonstrate its versatility
- * To actively contribute to the study and eradication of diseases and hereditary defects that affect the Norwegian Elkhound.



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