

## Meet The Breed

# The Rhodesian Ridgeback

*Congratulations! You are now the proud owner of one of the most versatile, loving and loyal breeds of dogs – the Rhodesian Ridgeback.*

## History and Characteristics

In November 1955, the American Kennel Club admitted the Rhodesian Ridgeback to its Stud Book as the 112<sup>th</sup> breed to be accorded AKC registration facilities. The Rhodesian Ridgeback is shown in the Hound Group (Group II). Since the recognition of the Rhodesian Ridgeback by the American Kennel Club, interest in the breed has increased in the United States.

The Rhodesian Ridgeback has both keen sight and a good nose. Possessing many of the characteristics generally associated with hounds, the Ridgeback has a quiet, gentle temperament and rarely barks for no reason. While able to enjoy lazing around in a patch of sun or in front of a winter fireplace, a Ridgeback can be instantly alert if a stranger should appear or if he is in pursuit of legitimate prey. While he gives the impression of a big, lazy, slow-moving animal, the Ridgeback can be a threatening presence as a watchdog. Developed not only to hunt, but also as a family protector, his affectionate disposition makes him a trustworthy companion for children.

## Training

Rhodesian Ridgebacks are intelligent animals. They respond well to positive, fair, consistent training, keeping in mind that positive does not mean permissive. Because of this intelligence, an untrained Ridgeback can become a nuisance. Trained, he is a pleasure as a companion, a hunting partner, a show dog or performance competitor. Because of his innate ability to protect his family, a Ridgeback should not be trained as a guard dog. Rather, the natural protective qualities should be supplemented with elementary obedience training.



A Rhodesian Ridgeback is loving, loyal, smart, clean and easy to maintain. He is good with other animals and children. Raising a good family member requires energy and patience. There are no shortcuts. It takes time to properly raise a puppy and mold a young dog into a respected family member.

When training your Rhodesian Ridgeback:

- ✓ Try to think like your dog.
- ✓ Be consistent in everything you do.

Because Rhodesian Ridgebacks are a strong and intelligent

dog, basic obedience training is a must, or they will not be the pleasurable companion you seek. Ridgebacks have been blessed with attributes of the many breeds that have gone into their making.

By observing the above two rules, you can successfully train and enjoy your Ridgeback.

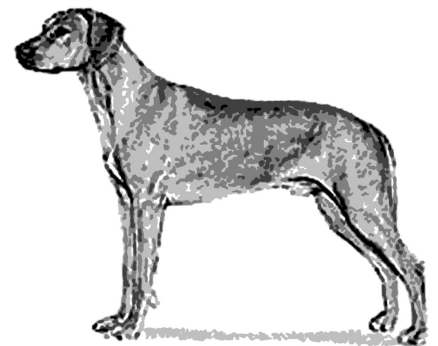
The use of a crate is strongly recommended while training your dog. This is a time when you do not equate the dog's needs with human needs. A dog is a denning animal. Dogs seek out a private and safe spot. A dog crate is your Ridgeback's safe haven. Get him used to it early in life.

*When in doubt about a phase in training your Ridgeback or any other problem, contact your breeder.*

## Living with a Ridgeback

Ridgebacks are "people" dogs. They like to be where you are and, if you allow it, they'll crawl into your bed, onto your sofa or favorite chair and your lap. You have to decide what is acceptable behavior and train them accordingly at a very early age. Remember, behaviors that are cute as a puppy may not be so funny when your Ridgeback is grown up and weighs 70 to 85 pounds.

It is very rare that a Ridgeback is found to be a fussy eater. If a Ridgeback suddenly refuses to eat, it is most likely sick, and a veterinarian should be consulted. Their appetites are large, and no matter how much food you give them, they will try to convince you that it is not enough. Free feeding is



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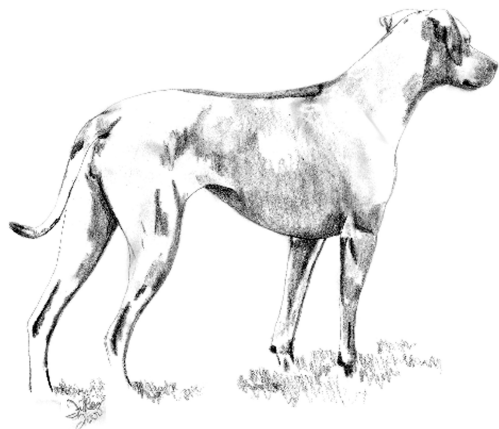
not recommended. The biggest problem with first-time Ridgeback owners is that they allow their dog to get too fat. It is best to follow your breeder's advice to the letter concerning type and quantity of food to feed. Ridgebacks are inherently adept at stealing food off table tops – so stand warned.

## Grooming

Because of his short coat, Ridgebacks shed very little. Once a week brushing, occasional baths, ear cleaning and nail trimming are all that is needed to keep him well groomed, clean and odor-free.

## Breed or Spay/Neuter

Today, with the increased awareness of pet over population, the question of whether to breed or not has become a serious and complex issue. Dedicated breeders spend years learning about their breed, studying



pedigrees and genetics and striving to avoid breedings that may produce inherited health and temperament problems. They are prepared to feed, house, socialize and provide

essential veterinary care for their puppies for months or even years, as well as cope with any unforeseen problems that may arise before, during or after the birth of the litter. They carefully screen potential homes, educate new owners and are willing to be responsible for every dog of their breeding for its lifetime.

Breeders who utilize the AKC's limited registration coupled with a spay/neuter non-breeding agreement are expressing their concerns about pet overpopulation and their dedication to the successful future of the breed. Recent studies have concluded that companion animals are usually happier and more polite and stable when neutered. Males are less likely to exhibit territorial marking and aggression, and females often live longer with fewer health problems. Their temperaments remain the same. Altered animals can participate in most American Kennel Club performance events, but they cannot participate in conformation events at dog shows. RRCUS strongly recommends Canine Good Citizenship (CGC) and or other AKC Obedience titles.

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## Additional Information

Listed below are books that will give you the proper insight into the Rhodesian Ridgeback and the correct way to train yours for a happy and comfortable life with you and your family.

### *Rhodesian Ridgeback*

AKC DVD (Order # VVT416) For current prices, contact: American Kennel Club, call 919-233-9767 or write: AKC Customer Service, 8051 Arco Corporate Dr., Suite 100, Raleigh, NC 27617-3390

### *The Rhodesian Ridgeback, The Origin, History & Standard*

T. C. Hawley. Hardback. Available for \$25 postage paid (*write for postage fees outside the U.S.*) Check or money order payable to Natalie Carleton, 5630 N. Abington Road, Tucson, AZ 85743.

### *The Definitive Rhodesian Ridgeback*

Second Edition, David H. Helgesen. Paperback. Available for \$33 postage paid. Check or money order payable to Rosalie Sterner, 18548 SE 245th Place, Kent, WA 98042.

### *Puppy Primer*

Brenda Scidmore & Patricia B. McConnell, Ph.D.

### *How To Be The Leader of The Pack. . .and Have Your Dog Love You for it!*

Patricia B. McConnell, Ph.D.

### *The New Knowledge of Dog Behavior*

Clarence Phaffenberger

### *A Dog Showing Primer*

Caroline Coile

### *Mother Knows Best*

Carol Lea Benjamin

Visit the **Rhodesian Ridgeback Club of the United States** for Breed Specific Articles, RR Rescue Groups, RRCUS Breeders & Regional RR Clubs listed by State. We encourage you to join RRCUS and receive the free quarterly club publication and other benefits.

[www.rrcus.org](http://www.rrcus.org)

Visit **AKC** for event and breed information.

[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

