

Breeds & Traits

This is a general overview of the breeds we have at PAWS and some of the common characteristics and behaviors we tend to see in each of them. Your foster puppy may have all these traits, or they may have none of them, all puppies are different! This just goes over some things you may notice with your foster puppy, or things you may find helpful when considering housing a new breed!



Labs were the most popular dog breed for 24 years in a row!

Labrador Retriever

Playful, energetic, intelligent, outgoing, and eager to work. Bred to be hunting dogs and retrieve birds from water.

- Generally high prey/toy drive. Love to chase things.
- Very food motivated, will do just about anything for a treat.
- Tend to eat very fast- may want a slow feeder bowl if they inhale their food to help prevent getting sick from it.
- Can gain weight quickly due to their eating habits. They like to act like they need more food when they really don't, so be sure to stick to your measurements when feeding. If you use a lot of treats during the day, give them less food for dinner.
- Tend to be very orally fixated in puppyhood and adolescence. Be sure to manage their environment to make sure they aren't able to chew or eat things they shouldn't. Along with this, they can also be a little more bitey when young.

GROOMING MAINTENANCE: Labs require occasional baths as needed and regular brushing as they shed a lot.

Golden Retriever

Affectionate, intelligent, eager to please, outgoing, and social. Bred to be hunting dogs and retrieve birds from water.

- Moderately food motivated- can depend on the context and may vary between dogs.
- High drive - this can also vary between dogs, but they generally love to work, chase, and play.
- Tend to be very orally fixated in puppyhood and adolescence. Can be bitey as puppies and have the tendency to like to carry things around in their mouths. Be sure to manage their environment well to make sure they can't eat or chew things they shouldn't.
- Can be sensitive - do best with very positive and rewarding training approaches, tend to be more affected by changes or stressors than labs.



Golden Retrievers originated in the Scottish Highlands in the 1800's, and every few years there is a gathering of hundreds of Golden Retrievers at the remains of the house where the first Golden Retrievers were born!

GROOMING MAINTENANCE: Require occasional baths and regular brushing as they shed a lot. Their fur can be prone to matting so be sure to check for mats regularly when brushing. Getting them groomed is suggested as the hair on their feet and body can get very long.



Poodles don't have fur, they have hair! This is why poodles can have fancy haircuts, rarely shed, and are hypoallergenic.

Poodle

Intelligent, goofy, playful, loyal, alert, instinctual, and sensitive. Bred to be hunting dogs and retrieve birds from water.

- Tend to be less food driven than the retrievers, but often highly motivated by toys and praise.
- Very high drive- love to chase or watch anything that moves. Can make them easily distractible, but also can be useful in training.
- Can get bored easily- love to work and train, however they need to be entertained or given work to do, otherwise they may get into mischief to entertain themselves. It's a good idea to change things up with training frequently to keep them engaged.
- Sensitive- very perceptive of changes in both their handler and environment. Do best with very positive and reward-based training approaches so they don't get frustrated. Tend to display their emotions very noticeably with their body language/actions, can be barky because of this.
- Tend to be more introverted at times, can be suspicious of new people. Once they get to know you though, you will be their best friend!

GROOMING MAINTENANCE: Require regular brushing and grooming to prevent matting and maintain a healthy coat and length. Grooming is recommended approximately every 6 weeks. Brushing and combing is recommended every day or every other day. It's a good idea to get them comfortable with being handled at a young age and exposed to grooming starting around 4 months of age.

Papillon

Intelligent, fun, friendly, affectionate, alert, active, outgoing, and tiny. Bred primarily to be companions, but also were used to hunt rats, mice, and other rodents.

- Tend to be less food motivated than the retrievers, but often highly motivated by toys and praise.
- Moderate to high energy- Their playful energy makes them very trainable and fun to work with. They love to run and chase things, causing them to get distracted easily sometimes, but their drive and energy make them fairly easy to redirect. Do well with lots of mental stimulation, and fun "game-like" training sessions.
- Loyal and affectionate- they are generally very people oriented and love attention, like to be included in everything. Can get very attached to "their person" which can sometimes cause some anxiety around separation or isolation. It's a good idea not to spoil or smother them too much so they can learn to be independent and confident on their own.
- Can be vocally expressive- prone to barking when highly aroused/ excited.

GROOMING MAINTENANCE: Papillons have long, fine, silky fur. They shed moderately, though not to the extent of labs or goldens. Due to the texture of their coat, their hair gets tangled and can get matted very easily, daily brushing and combing is recommended. It's a good idea to have them groomed professionally starting at a young age (around 3-4 months), and around every 2 or 3 months after to help keep their coat more manageable and prevent them from getting too shaggy.



"Papillon" is French for butterfly due to the unique "butterfly-like" shape of their ears!