

Understanding Basenjis — Your Type of Dog?



What is a Basenji?

Owners will testify to the Basenji's phenomenal intelligence, his inventiveness, his curiosity, and his clownish sense of humor. An independent thinker, the Basenji is charming as well as trying. Reared with affection as well as discipline, a Basenji makes a delightful companion. These major personality traits are loved by Basenji enthusiasts but the breed is definitely not for everyone.

He is active and resourceful at play and cozy and comfortable in repose. He will demand attention at times but is not a clinging dog. He will keep good track of what you are up to without constantly requiring your attention.

The silent hunter is not going to bark to frighten off an intruder. They do become alert and interested when friend or stranger approaches the home or if there are odd noises. People acting suspiciously will upset a Basenji. Many Basenjis will try to avoid a suspicious intruder. Some may happily greet an intruder while a few may try to protect their home. Do not count on a Basenji as a traditional guard dog.





The Basenji is immaculate, grooming his coat and paying particular attention to his feet, again, like a cat. He takes such good care of himself that he rarely needs a bath. This is certainly a good thing, as the Basenji does not enjoy getting wet. An occasional brisk rub with a rough towel and a going-over with a soft brush will delight him and will cause his coat to glisten. The Basenji is practically odorless. If there is any scent at all, it is reminiscent of clean, dry grass.

Coming from Africa originally, the Basenji enjoys warmth. During very cold weather he can be outside while he is active. He will hate the rain, avoiding it like the plague, but enjoy a good romp in fresh snow.

Personality and Physical Traits Chart

Personality Traits	What This Means For You!
Active and curious personality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Needs regular exercise➤ Is very entertaining➤ Active minds are easily bored➤ Is into everything➤ Isn't good at home alone with nothing to do➤ Can overwhelm small children by jumping on them➤ House must be reasonably dog proof...at least for a couple years➤ Is in danger of hurting himself if allowed off leash
Proud, independent and stubborn nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Has a strong sense of what he thinks is right and wrong➤ Training requires skill not brute force➤ Training should start immediately when you get your puppy home➤ Perfectly capable of ignoring your instructions➤ Can be stubborn➤ Can be conveniently "hard of hearing"

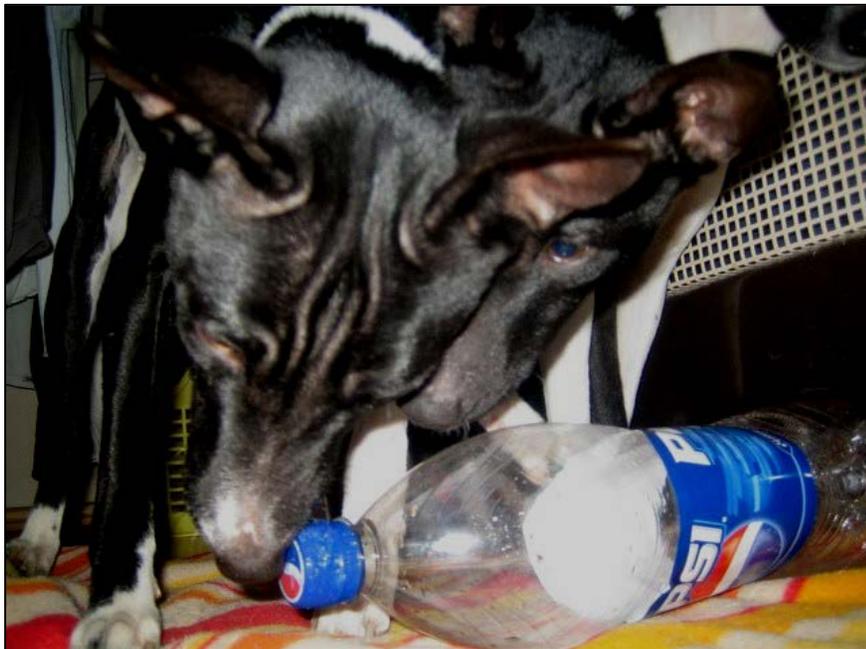
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rare to find a truly, constantly obedient Basenji
Basically a friendly dog but can be aloof with strangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ May or may not like your friends ➤ Children must be well behaved ➤ Not necessarily a gushy dog ➤ Not a good guard dog
Agile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can be great escape artists ➤ Raise your puppy so it doesn't learn how to escape ➤ Your fenced yard should have a high fence
Non-barking BUT not mute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Doesn't bark but has other sounds ➤ Basically quiet dog unless he is unhappy ➤ Very loud howl or scream when lonely ➤ Owners love to hear the yodel greeting of a happy Basenji
All-purpose hound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Basenjis were bred to be independent, resourceful and efficient hunters ➤ Their keen nose and hunting instinct can lead them into dangerous situations such as the path of a speeding car ➤ They are safest in an enclosed area (fenced yard) or on a leash

<p>Pack mentality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A single Basenji may not do well left alone for long periods ➤ For working owners, the company of another dog is the next best thing to having you there ➤ Basenjies may or may not get along easily with dogs they don't know preferring their own pack ➤ Early socialization with other dogs and all sizes of people is essential ➤ Clever dogs try to be pack leader so you must be kindly in control from the beginning
<p>A smallish medium sized dog</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Actually a great size as they are easy to lift ➤ But not fragile like a toy breed ➤ A strong dog ➤ Doesn't think he is small at all...a smaller dog who thinks he is very large indeed. ➤ Lives into his teens so be prepared for many years of enjoyment and responsibility
<p>Clean, smooth coated dog</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A wash-and-wear dog, who rarely needs a bath ➤ Needs little grooming to stay sparkling clean ➤ Sometimes good for people with allergies but sometimes not ➤ You'll find very little shed hair in your house ➤ Usually clean in his habit and with consistency, easily house trained

One Oddity

- Being close to their wild roots, Basenjis all tend to have their puppies at the same time of year
- In the Northern Hemisphere most pups are born in October, November and December
- You may have to wait a while for a pup

Is a Basenji Right for You?



An interesting quote found at Basenji Companions on the internet: "They are not a typical domesticated dog, and it is unfair to expect them to act like what you might expect of a lethargic house dog." Basenjis are not for everyone; it seems people love them and truly enjoy their qualities or hate the breed because of the same basic qualities. Will you be one of those who find them

to be an amusing character, fun and an interesting challenge or will you think they are impossibly disobedient and basically destruction on four legs?



Consider Your Answers to These Ten Questions

1. If you have been accustomed to dogs with low energy levels, will you be happy with the active, curious temperament of the Basenji?
2. Do you have high energy levels to help your Basenji expand his energy through exercise?
3. Because of his agility and curiosity, a Basenji's special needs require you to keep him safe and secure. Can you provide the environment inside and outside your home?
4. If your concept of a dog is a loyal, obedient companion, are you going to be happy with an independent and naughty Basenji?
5. Are you willing to work with your Basenji using the most modern training techniques right from the beginning?
6. Because they possess a hunting instinct, Basenjies tend to roam and should be kept in an enclosed area. Are you able to provide this type of environment for your Basenji?
7. Basenjies do not do well when left alone for long periods. Will you have the time to give your Basenji a great deal of attention and affection?
8. Basenjies make a poor guard dog. Is this acceptable to you?
9. The decision to bring a new Basenji into your home should be one that is agreed upon by all members of the family. Most Basenjies live long lives of 12-14 years and sometimes even more. Are you willing to make this commitment?
10. Do you have the kind of sense of humor that will tolerate the Basenjies "non-doggy" temperament?





*If you have answered yes
to the above questions then
a Basenji may be the right dog for you!*