

Dogs

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The German Shepherd Dog, also known as an Alsatian or just the German Shepherd, is a breed of large-sized dog that originated in Germany. The German Shepherd is a relatively new breed of dog, with its origin dating to 1899.

As part of the Herding Group, the German Shepherd is a working dog developed originally for herding and guarding sheep. Because of its strength, intelligence and abilities in obedience training it is often employed in police and military roles around the world. German Shepherds currently account for 4.6% of all dogs registered with the American Kennel Club. Due to its loyal and protective nature, the German Shepherd is one of the most registered of breeds.



Name

The breed was named Deutscher Schäferhund by von Stephanitz, literally translating to "German Shepherd Dog". The breed was so named due to its original purpose of assisting shepherds in herding and protecting sheep. At the time, all other herding dogs in Germany were referred to by this name; they thus became known as Altdeutsche Schäferhunde or Old German Shepherd Dogs.



The direct translation of the name was adopted for use in the official breed registry; however, at the conclusion of World War I, it was believed that the inclusion of the word "German" would harm the breed's popularity, due to the anti-German sentiment of the era. The breed was officially renamed by the UK Kennel Club to "Alsatian Wolf Dog" which was also adopted by many other international kennel clubs. Eventually, the appendage "wolf dog" was dropped. The name Alsatian remained for five decades, until 1977, when successful campaigns by dog enthusiasts pressured the British kennel clubs to allow the breed to be registered again as German Shepherd Dogs. The word "Alsatian" still appeared in parentheses as part of the formal breed name and was only removed in 2010.



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German Shepherds are a large sized dog, generally between 55 and 65 centimetres (22 and 26 in) at the withers, with an ideal height of 63 centimetres (25 in) according to Kennel Club standards. Weight is 30–40 kilograms (66–88 lb) for males and 22–32 kilograms (49–71 lb) for females. They have a domed forehead, a long square-cut muzzle and a black nose. The jaws are strong, with a scissor-like bite. The eyes are medium-sized and brown with a lively, intelligent, and self-assured look. The ears are large and stand erect, open at the front and parallel, but they often are pulled back during movement. They have a long neck, which is raised when excited and lowered when moving at a fast pace. The tail is bushy and reaches to the hock.



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German Shepherds can be a variety of colors, the most common of which are tan/black and red/black. Most color varieties have black masks and black body markings which can range from a classic "saddle" to an over-all "blanket." Rarer colour variations include the sable, all-black, all-white, liver, and blue varieties. The all-black and sable varieties are acceptable according to most standards; however, the blue and liver are considered to be serious faults and the all-white is grounds for instant disqualification in some standards.



Intelligence

German Shepherds were bred specifically for their intelligence, a trait for which they are now renowned. In the book *The Intelligence of Dogs*, author Stanley Coren ranked the breed third for intelligence, behind Border Collies and Poodles. He found that they had the ability to learn simple tasks after only five repetitions and obeyed the first command given 95% of the time. Coupled with their strength, this trait makes the breed desirable as police, guard, and search and rescue dogs, as they are able to quickly learn various tasks and interpret instructions better than other large breeds.



<http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pastor-alem%C3%A3o>

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