



So you want a Finnish Lapphund

Life with a Finnish Lapphund is never dull. They are busy and active. They have a loud high pitched voice which they can use far too often and they need to learn from an early age that this is not acceptable. They are real family dogs and like to be part of your life and whatever you are doing. They are marvellous with children and many children have overcome their fear of dogs after meeting a Finnish Lapphund. They are also good with other family pets after an introduction and supervision from the start. They do not enjoy being left alone for long periods and will become destructive and some may suffer with separation anxiety. They are also independent and can amuse themselves quite easily.

Finnish Lapphunds are very versatile and highly intelligent – often too much so! They can be trained for any of the disciplines such as agility, obedience and heelwork to music. They require regular exercise, but not excessive amounts before they are a year old and finished growing. When old enough they are quite happy to do a long hike if required.

They love to dig huge holes in your garden and lawn and often use this as a way to escape from the garden. Think twice before buying a Finnish Lapphund if you are proud of your garden. A securely fenced garden is essential as they can squeeze through the smallest of gaps.



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They can be stubborn at times, but this can usually be resolved with a little persuasion and a small reward. Recalling when off lead playing is often a problem with the breed because of their adventurous nature, there is always something more interesting than returning to their owner straight away! They are excellent watchdogs and will alert their owners to any unusual sounds.

One of the big loves in a Finnish lapphund's life is food. They are not often fussy eaters. But be warned they will eat anything and everything from clothing to sharp dangerous objects. They are also partial to electrical cables! You will need to make sure these things are well out of reach of an inquisitive puppy. Make sure they have plenty of toys such as a large Kong and chews to keep them occupied. They can also hunt for their own food for example mice and birds.



A seven week old puppy with typical markings

FL's come in a variety of colours. Some have well defined 'spectacles' around the eyes and distinct markings forming expressive eye brows. In a young puppy markings are not always apparent but gradually develop as they grow. Some Finnish Lapphunds are 'Solid' colour and have no markings. They have a double coat with a soft thick undercoat and a long coarser outer coat. A grooming session of about an hour once a week should keep them in good order, with claws trimmed regularly. Give chews and large bones often to keep their teeth clean.

The breed generally has a long healthy life expectancy well over 10 years of age. Health problems have been carefully monitored and a good breeder will ensure their breeding stock have been hip scored under the BVA/KC schemes and undergone a DNA blood test for the eye condition prcd-PRA and also an annual ophthalmic eye examination for PRA and Hereditary Cataracts. **Please ensure the breeder shows you the certificates.**

A Dog or Bitch?

Should I purchase a dog or a bitch? If you are undecided please carefully consider all the aspects, of each sex, before making your mind up.

The obvious difficulty with a bitch is her season. All bitches differ, although this normally occurs in the Finnish Lapphund every six to eight months. Bitches tend to shed their coat after a season. Dogs also shed their coats but not as frequently. Dogs can quite easily become distracted if they have been around a bitch in season and can fail to perform in the show ring and go off their food for a few days and can lose weight and condition if he is troubled by bitches in season. A male dog will be larger and heavier giving increased power and strength, although not difficult to control.

You may feel a bitch will be a better, and more loving, companion than a dog - but is this really the case? Those who have owned both dogs and bitches often comment that the companionship offered by the two sexes is identical. Whether you choose a dog or bitch the way you handle and train your dog will determine how you, yourself, are treated in return.

Contacting Breeders

The Kennel Club has a listed of Accredited Breeders and offers good advice on what to expect from a breeder. <http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/item/2101> The Finnish Lapphund is still a numerically small breed so you will have to wait quite a while for a puppy. Visit shows and breeders and meet their dogs. This will give you the chance to ask questions, assess the temperament and see how they are groomed. A good breeder will ask you many questions to convince them that you will be a suitable owner for one of their puppies. Often doing a home check to make sure the puppy has enough space, check fencing and to generally check that all the family want a puppy and how much time you can give the puppy.

Breeding and stud terms

There is a possibility that you could be offered a bitch on 'breeding terms'. Usually this involves certain conditions being set and agreed to between you and the breeder. These conditions can vary from breeder to breeder. If this is offered to you make sure all the terms are in writing and that both parties fully understand what is involved. Examples of these terms include: which stud dog is used to produce the first litter and/or a puppy from that litter. You may also be expected to pay the stud fee. The breeder will normally want pick of the litter and in some cases will want the whole litter as part of the breeding terms. Remember if you want a dog purely as a pet it may be distressing for a family if the bitch has to be mated and then stay at the breeders to raise the litter for a number of weeks.

If you wish to buy a dog, he could be offered on 'stud terms'. This is where the breeder reserves the right to use him, at stud, without payment. Such agreements usually specify the number of occasions his services are to be made accessible to the breeder, or may even restrict the bitches he can, or cannot, be used on. Stud work can alter the dog's nature and he may become aggressive towards other males.

If you are not completely happy with breeding or stud terms it may be better to wait until you can buy a puppy without any conditions attached.

