

## The Large, Athletic Bernese Mountain Dog

Originating in Switzerland, the Bernese Mountain Dog was bred for herding, guarding, drafting, and droving. His large, sturdy frame and long coat is perfectly suited for performance in cold mountainous environments.

Typically, the Bernese Mountain Dog stands 23 to 27.5 inches at the shoulder and weighs between 70 and 100 pounds. He is a large breed and is similar to the Golden Retriever in structure, only heavier and bigger-boned. The shedding coat is medium-long, wavy, glossy, and thick and requires regular brushing to keep it in good condition. The Bernese is tricolored, primarily black with rust and white markings on the chest, muzzle, feet, and forehead.

This large, beautiful, athletic dog is easily trained and makes a great watchdog and a good family pet. Though playful and gregarious as a pup, he tends to become more reserved and guarded as he matures. He is normally affectionate to his owner, but can be very suspicious of strangers. Some are very timid to the point of being phobic. This potential for extreme shyness can lead to a fear-based aggression that is difficult to modify.

This breed also possesses a dominant, head-strong temperament. Stubbornness normally calls for a firm, consistent training technique, but many Bernese, particularly the females, can slip into a panicky mind-set if pushed, sometimes resulting in a bite. This tendency is usually a result of poor breeding practices, and may not be reversible.

A well bred Bernese Mountain Dog is trainable, but patience and precision are crucial. The Bernese needs daily exercise and is happier in a rural environment. Because of the potential for aggression, this breed is not recommended for families with children. Early socialization is important from day one, as well as handling and grooming. The Bernese Mountain Dog lives only ten to twelve years and can suffer from hip dysplasia and bloat. Anyone interested in this breed should visit numerous breeders and closely observe the parents and litter mates.

Recommended feeding for this breed is 1 ½ - 2 ½ cans (13.3oz) of high-quality meaty product with biscuit added in equal part or 5 cupfuls of a complete, dry dog food.

A house with a fenced yard is important for the Bernese Mountain Dog. A strong, patient leader is mandatory, as well as early training, handling, and socialization. Families with children should at present avoid this breed, as should nervous, cautious, and over-bearing people. The elderly and the disabled may not be able to handle this large, active breed.

### About the Author

Source: <http://101dogbreeds.com>