

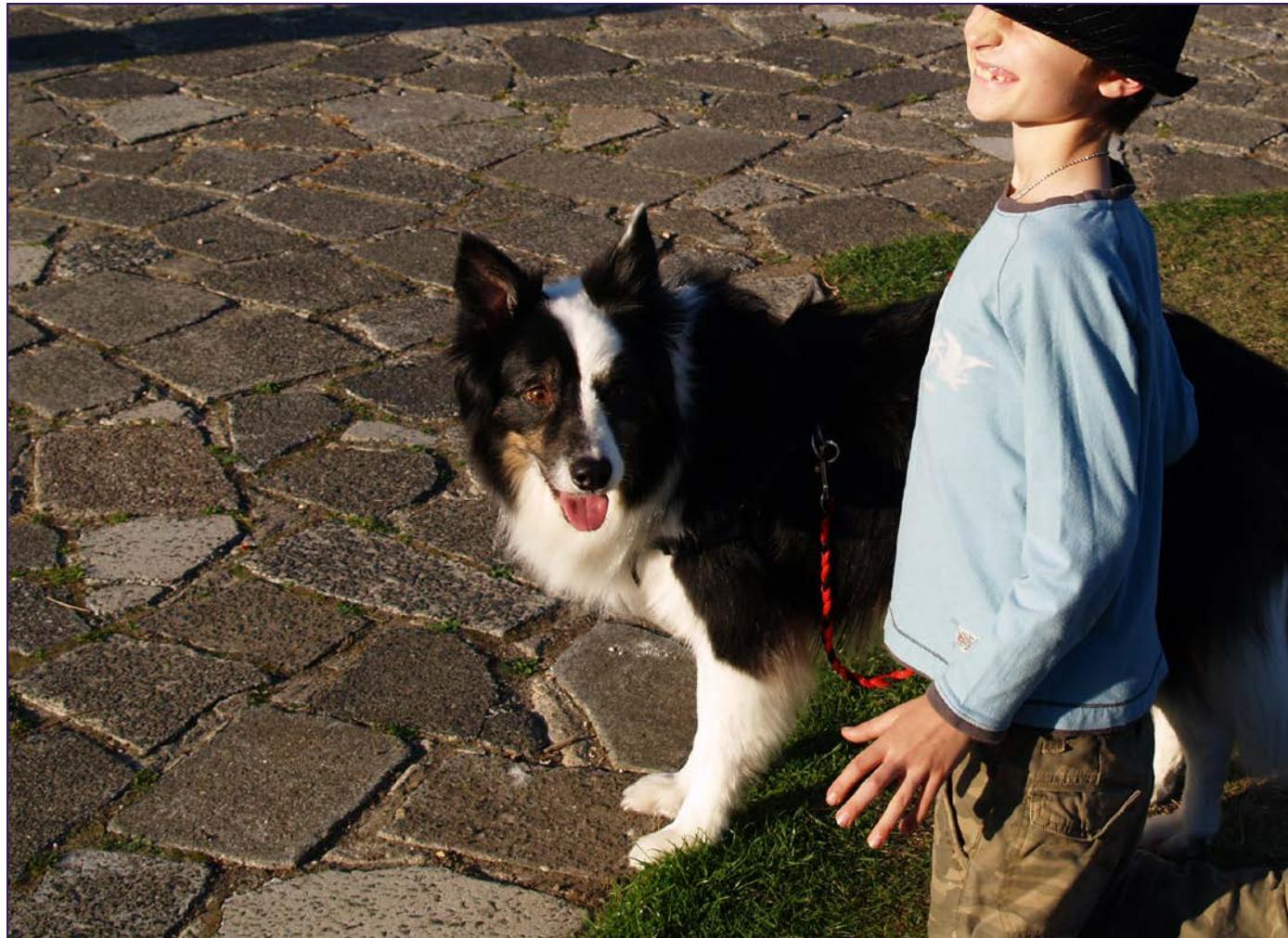
INTRODUCTION

The friendship between humans and dogs is one of the oldest in history. From archeological findings, it is known that the first dog (*Canis familiaris*) domesticated by humans was in fact a wolf (*Canis lupus*). Dogs did not become domesticated through force, there was a friendship and mutual benefit of the relationship which enabled both to eat and therefore survive.

The evolution of the dog was rapid. All physical and psychological characters that we see in dogs did originate in the genetics of the wolf. So the wolf followed two paths – in one path the species remained the same; wild, untamed and

fierce, but the other pathway to evolution enabled the existence of dogs we see today.

In every component of life, dogs have accompanied humans. In war, in sport, in hunting, in scientific discoveries, in work, in wealth and in art, dogs have been cooperating with humans. Nowadays there are many dogs whose lives have meaning and purpose beyond companionship; however the majority of dogs over the world are pets living in homes as much loved family members. They offer companionship, love and loyalty; the dog remains deeply a part of human life and our best friend.



Dogs are humans' best friends

LESSON 1: DOGS AND HUMANS

HISTORY

We accept the wolf was domesticated by humans 25-30 million years ago. Throughout history, dogs have functioned successfully alongside humans and their role in social environments was frequently documented through paintings, ancient drawings and sculptures. Prehistoric paintings associate dogs as household companions, not an animal used for a food source (unlike bison, deer, boar etc). The first proof of dogs used as guards became evident from 4500BC when images of dogs wearing a collar appear.

Egyptian art shows some of the dog breeds we are most familiar with today including the hounds, dachshunds and mastiffs. In Egypt killing a dog was a crime often punishable by death, however the Hebrew culture was known for their dislike of the dog – they felt no positive outcomes were found in canine interactions and instead dogs were considered to be dirty animals which were left to fend for themselves. In many regions the dog was not originally a companion, dog meat was considered a delicacy, often served at meals of aristocracy. This view remains today in some cultures and countries, and sadly dog meat is still served as food.

During the roman to the medieval period, dogs played a hardy part in war. Their lives were taken as part of the military procedure in which they were first used to carry messages inside their stomachs. On arrival at their destination, the dog was then killed in order to quickly retrieve the message. The coming of the barbarians (considered by the Greeks as people who originated from the Persian Empire), after the fall of the Roman

Empire throughout 400-500BC, saw dogs being left to fend for themselves again and many packs of wild and untamed dogs emerged during that era. Finally at the end of this period, dogs re-emerged as hunters during times of extreme famine.

Throughout the middle ages dogs often provided companionship and protection of monks living in monasteries. An example of this is the German Shepherd bred by German monks who required a strong, brave guarding animal to keep thieves from stealing the treasures of their monasteries.

There are innumerable other examples of dogs used throughout this time in war. As the need for the dog strengthened during this time, we can see the introduction of some basic dog care and veterinary health being introduced. This was very simple; suggestions included dogs should be kept warm, skin conditions could be eased with bathing and feeding should be regular from clean bowls.

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Suggested Task

Research about dogs throughout war periods in History.

Make a list of breeds of dogs and their traits, which helped fight in war.

Name five of the most famous 'War Dogs' and explain how the dogs helped?

Using the Internet, books, the library:

Look up ancient cultural depictions of dogs and read about the history of Dogs in particular countries of interest to see how dogs were viewed.

Finally during the Renaissance dogs finally became a creature which had earned the respect of humans. Cruelty toward dogs became unacceptable during this time, and dogs became a symbol of wealth. Owning a dog for pleasure became common and upper-class women were known to want to groom and care for their dogs greatly, thus the idea of 'lap-dog' was created.

DOG BREEDS

Dogs come in many sizes, shapes and colours. Those conforming to specific standards are classified as breeds. Various breeds have been developed over generations for specific purposes for example, sport, work, show or toys.

Depending on the breed, the size and temperament of the dog will differ greatly. You will find tiny (teacup), small, medium, large and giant dog breeds. Smaller breeds are best suited to small homes or apartment living because of the obvious space restrictions. Small breeds also cost less to look after than larger breeds, for example less needs to be spent on feeds and medications. Many working breeds require space to exercise and run, some large breeds like to sleep and do very little but still need an appropriate living area and outside space

Some dogs have a reputation for being easily provoked or are more likely to attack other dogs. Some breeds are great around young children, other breeds are less tolerant. It is rare for a dog to bite its owner, but it is an owner's responsibility to prevent the dog from biting other people. Dog bites, especially from large breeds can be severe. Small children have been seriously maimed and some have died. Some aggressive breeds have

been banned from residential areas and you must check the laws in your area and consider selecting a large or giant breed or an aggressive breed very carefully.

PURE BREEDS OR CROSSBREEDS

Pure dog breeds, or pedigrees, are susceptible to hereditary abnormalities and disease susceptibility. Whilst buying a pure breed will give you some confidence in your pet's temperament, final size and appearance, if bought from a puppy, there are a number of psychological as well as physical issues which you may need to be aware of.

Some examples of pure breed problems include back problems which can lead to paralysis of the rear legs. This is because they have been specifically bred to have much longer backs. Paralysis may become permanent if not properly treated.

Another common health concern is gastric problems which are an issue with large deep-chested breeds, particularly Great Danes, German Shepherds, Boxers and Weimaraners. This is a major concern and you should check with the breeder to determine if the parents or grandparents, or any siblings have had the condition as treatment is very expensive and not often successful.

Deafness and eye problems are associated with some breeds including Poodles, Australian Cattle Dogs, Cocker Spaniels, Border Collies and Golden Retrievers.

Joint problems are also a concern in many breeds, with larger breeds at risk of hip dysplasia and elbow dysplasia, while small and miniature breeds can suffer patella (knee cap) dysplasia.

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Suggested Task

What breed of dog would you have if you were to have a new pet?

Research this breed and find out the size, temperament, disease susceptibility and abnormalities.

Abnormalities are being targeted by responsible breeders and many are becoming much less common. The whole breed should not be condemned; rather you should be sure to confirm the health of the breeder's animals, particularly the direct bloodline of the dog you want.

When we think about cross-breeding we think of the vigour of hybrids. Basically the genetic mix often enables the dog to have greater health and vitality. This is discussed in greater detail later in the book.

A SELECTION OF COMMON BREEDS

There are over 500 dog breeds however with the emergence and increasing popularity for particular breed mixes we can see over 600 breeds emerge. For example the Poodle, Maltese and Pomeranian, which are all very small breeds, are often mixed and bred to produce 'designer' toy dogs such as the Malpoo, Maltipom, Pomenese, Moodle, Pomapoo for example.

For the purpose of this book it is not possible to write about each breed. We have selected eighteen breeds and discussed the physical description, including height and weight (please note maximum heights and weights are given for males and bitches); and a brief description of their characters or personality.



Alaskan malamute

Alaskan malamute

Description: this is a strong, well built dog with a wide head, upright ears and small eyes. Although they tend to have a proud expression, they also have softness about their eyes which can give a sweet expression. They have a thick coat, with a soft woolly undercoat ranging from very light gray to black. The tails appears bushy and is quite long with hair flowing down onto the back when the tail is ringed. Height for dogs is up to 49cm and for bitches is 46cm. Weight for dogs is up to 23kg and for bitches is up to 20kg.

Personality: this is an intelligent and loyal breed. It can be a vicious fighter when challenged by other dogs yet is it very sweet and often affectionate towards its master. Although these are hard working dogs with incredible stamina, these dogs have become great pets as they are odourless, clean and don't bark. They are mostly good-natured.



Australian Cattle Dog

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Suggested Task

Take a walk to the local dog park and identify some common breeds of dogs.

What breed did you see the most of? How does this relate to your current environment?

Australian Cattle dog

Description: a medium sized dog with straight head and moderately short hair. Colours are blue, black or chestnut markings with red and black spots on the head. Height for dogs is up to 48cm and for bitches is 46cm. Weight for dogs is up to 23kg and for bitches is up to 20kg.