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Are Shelties For Everyone?

Based on an article by Trini Gilmore

In truth, the Shetland Sheepdog is NOT a breed that fits into all households. Naturally, shelties have a wide range of personality traits that cannot be "lumped" under one description. However, there are certain traits that are fairly universal to the breed.

- Shelties are verbal.
- Shelties are reserved by nature and early socialization is needed to keep them from being shy.
- Shelties are extremely loyal either to one person or one family
- Shelties are sound sensitive and sound reactive
- Shelties will chase (in an attempt to herd) anything that moves.
- Shelties are very bright and need to be given something to occupy their mind and bodies. Many will invent a "job" if they are not given one.
- Shelties do not like to spend time away from their people. A sheltie that is left alone all day is usually not a very happy little dog.
- Shelties are an emotional breed. They are very sensitive to the moods of their people. They do best in a home where gentleness is the way of life.
- Shelties are an active breed and need exercise everyday. They need more than a 10-minute walk around the block.
- Shelties need regular biweekly (minimum) grooming and they shed extensively.

If someone is looking for a very laid back, not particularly sensitive, doesn't care if you are coming or going, low maintenance, average intelligence dog...they would find the sheltie exasperating, to say the least. Shelties demand to be an integral part of the family to which they belong. They stick their noses into everyone's business and feel compelled to make comments on their observations. They will follow their person to the corner of the earth and ALWAYS into the bathroom. They consider you leaving them behind as an aberration of proper behavior and will voice their disapproval...loud and long....often accompanied by frantic twirling and jumping. They are selective as to which of your friends is worthy of their affection, and which are to be observed from a distance, before a verdict is rendered. They will steal your FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD, right out of the mouths of babes, and show no shame. They will give chase, if not properly restrained, to any and all moving objects. They will sense your every mood and will be happy and sad along with you. They love attention and they love to learn. In short, they demand nothing less than being a FULL member of your family...they do not consider themselves mere dogs (banish the thought!)

So if you are considering bringing a sheltie, or shelties, into your family be prepared to spend a lot time, energy and love on this new member...for that is what they need. In return, they will give you some of the most wonderful moments of your life, and memories you will cherish forever.

For more breed and general information about Shelties, check out the [American Shetland Sheepdog Association's \(ASSA\)](http://www.assa-usa.org) website.