

LEONBERGER CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

The breed club and registry for the Leonberger in North America

In 1985, a small but passionate group of Leonberger owners & breeders founded the Leonberger Club of America, Inc. (LCA) with a core purpose to preserve the health and temperament of the breed in North America. The LCA registry strives to ensure the physical and mental soundness of the Leonberger, adhering to the FCI Leonberger standard. Also important to the LCA and its members is educating potential Leonberger owners about the possibilities, limitations, and responsibilities of owning this very large breed.

LCA registered Leonbergers to be used for breeding are evaluated on their own merit no sooner than 16 months of age and may not be bred sooner than 24 months of age. Close inbreeding is prohibited and passing OFA x-rays for hips and elbows is required. Additional annual health tests, including eye exams and thyroid screening are highly recommended.

The owners of LCA registered kennels pledge to uphold the club's code of ethics and put health and temperament of the Leonberger above all else. The breeding regulations and code of ethics ensure a minimum standard for every litter registered with the LCA but many LCA breeders set an even higher standard for themselves.

The Leonberger Club of America, Inc. is affiliated with the majority of Leonberger clubs of the world through the International Leonberger Union, all of which work together for the protection and betterment of the breed. The Leonberger Club of America, Inc. is the only breed club registry for Leonbergers in North America and remains dedicated to maintaining its independent status. Because the LCA is the breed registry for the Leonberger in the United States, it can ensure a minimum standard for every LCA registered litter.

The LCA offers something for all of its members including a registry, a high quality quarterly magazine filled with pictures and articles, LCA sanctioned obedience and conformation trials throughout the country, educational seminars, certificate programs and more. The LCA provides information on LCA registered kennels, including a Stud Book featuring LCA registered stud dogs with photos and health information provided by the owners. The LCA maintains a close relationship with Leonberger Rescue, Inc. and the Leonberger Health Foundation. These organizations are dedicated to re-homing displaced Leos and advancing health research to better the breed. The LCA web site offers information on every aspect of the Leonberger dog; how to contact the Health Committee and various other committees along with links to the LeoRescue website, the LCA affiliated regional Leonberger clubs, as well as the international Leonberger clubs. We encourage anyone who owns or is interested in owning a Leonberger to maintain their LCA membership. Membership keeps you informed and helps to support the club efforts to keep our American Leonbergers as sound and healthy, as possible.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

INTERNET:

LCA homepage: www.LeonbergerClubofAmerica.com

Leonberger Portal: www.leonberger.com

International Leonberger Union homepage: www.LeonbergerUnion.com

BOOKS (IN ENGLISH)

"The Leonberger", by Angela White, t.f.h. Books. England, 1998. Available from the Leonberger Club of Great Britain or from <http://www.Amazon.co.uk/>

"Leonberger", by Madeline Lusby, Interpet publishing, England 2002.

"The Leonberger", by Guido Perosino, Italy 1998

PERIODICALS (IN ENGLISH)

"The Leonberger, the golden-hearted lion dog" By Sharon Pfaumer in Dog World (USA), July 1996, pp. 14-22.

"The Leonberger", in Dogs Monthly (UK) by Larry Rahmer, Vol. 16, No. 4, April 1998. Available from Tamaryn Hodge for the cover price and international postage. Email TamarynH@aol.com

"Leo the Lionheart", in Dog Fancy by Phil Davis, May 2003, pp. 56-57.



LEONBERGERS, or Leos, as they are known to their friends, are loyal, outgoing “lions” who originated in the mid-nineteenth century in Leonberg, Germany. These wonderful, weatherproof family dogs are arguably one of the oldest of the German pure breeds. Although fairly well-known in France, Germany, and Scandinavia, they are considered uncommon in most other countries.



One of the larger breeds among dogs, the Leonberger is powerful and yet elegant. Females stand 26 to 28 inches at the withers and weigh around 100 pounds. Males are usually considerably larger, standing 28-31 inches and can weigh, even without excess fat, over 150 pounds (although most are in the 120 pound range). Their luxurious double coat is lion-colored, ranging from a light sand to a rich mahogany, accented by a black mask and often black tips on the body fur.

Leos are classified by the FCI as watch dogs and working dogs (Group 2, Section 2.2) and are considered ideal family members. The standard describes the requirements for the Leonberger temperament as follow: “As a family dog, the Leonberger is an agreeable partner for present day dwelling and living conditions, who can be taken anywhere without difficulty and is distinguished by his marked friendliness towards children. He is neither shy nor aggressive. As a companion, he is agreeable, obedient and fearless in all situations of life.”

Leonbergers are exceedingly family-oriented and demonstrate an ardent need to be an integral member of their family “pack.” They are enthusiastic participants in most family endeavors and are adept at hiking, backpacking, running, swimming, and socializing at human gatherings. And they work as enthusiastically as they play. Throughout the world Leos have demonstrated success in such activities as water rescue, tracking, agility, carting, therapy, and other tasks involving great strength and agility coupled with gentleness. Individual personalities of the Leonberger range from quite active with a strong working drive (so called Turbo-Bergers) to quite mellow and laid back without much desire to do more than an extended walk every day and a couple of play sessions (so called Couch-Bergers).

Leos are large dogs and are frightening to many people simply by virtue of their size. Fear and aggression in a stranger can activate a dog’s protective instincts. Big dogs can also do a great deal of damage just by jumping up on someone in a burst of enthusiasm. They are not born to be a perfect companion. When you invite a Leonberger to share your life, you bring to that contract the responsibility to make sure that both you and your dog receive excellent obedience training.

IS A LEONBERGER THE RIGHT DOG FOR YOU?MAYBE NOT!

Most Leonbergers are wonderful, loving dogs...but due to their size and strength, they are NOT the dog for everyone. They require time, dedication, grooming and above all...training to ensure a well-behaved dog. Buying any dog should be a lifetime commitment, make sure that you learn about the Leonberger before you buy – consider the following guidelines:

Don’t buy a Leonberger if you don’t want to share your home (not just your yard) with your dog. They are devoted to their people and want to be with you as much as possible. They are likely to behave badly to alleviate their boredom - digging, chewing, barking, etc. They will tolerate being left home by themselves for short periods, as long as they spend time with you when you are home.



Don’t buy a Leonberger if you have only seen them at shows - with glistening coats, dry and fluffy. The Leonberger’s true nature is to romp and swim outdoors. They thrive on being wet and don’t mind mud at all. Their natural look is slightly damp with leaves stuck to their coats.

Don’t buy a Leonberger if you don’t want to spend the time to train your dog. Although they are called “Gentle Giants”, they do go through a very stubborn adolescent stage. **It’s imperative to teach them to respect and honor you and your rules at this point** - if you don’t, you will have a 100 pound + canine that does not know how to behave to make you happy (they may take food from the table because they can, sleep on the couch or your bed when full of mud, or take off chasing a cat down the street with you attached to the other end of the leash). They want to please you, but they need guidance from you to know how. This requires committing to at least a puppy kindergarten

course, as well as basic obedience classes before the dog is one year old. It is essential to do 1-2 short (10 minute) homework sessions every day during their first two years of life, as well as incorporating the lessons into your daily life as often as possible. This training cannot be delegated to someone else (e.g., boarding school) because the relationship of respect and obedience is personal between the

dog and the person doing the training. As each lesson is learned, the rest of the household must also work with the dog, ensuring that they are obeyed as well.

Don't buy a Leonberger if you are a fastidious housekeeper. They have long fur that tends to be everywhere. They shed mainly twice a year (in large quantities), but there is always some fur in the corners. They adore being wet and muddy - that means wiping four paws every time they come in from outside unless you don't mind the occasional muddy paw print.



Their coats usually look and smell clean which means that the mud and muck that they love to play in has come off on your floors, and oftentimes walls and furniture, as well. Their tails are at the perfect height to sweep the coffee table knickknacks right off. Although they don't drool, they are not the most efficient about closing their mouths after drinking water, or eating. They may dribble food or water across your freshly mopped floors.

Don't buy a Leonberger if you are unwilling to attend to their basic health and grooming needs.

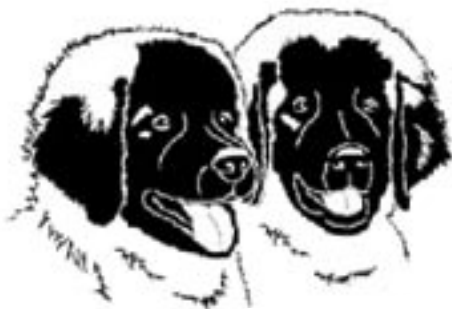
They need to be examined by a veterinarian every 3 weeks until they are 4 months old, and then at least once a year. They need a good brushing and nail trimming once a week. If you don't want to use this time to bond with your dog or are unable to do this yourself, be prepared to spend the extra money to have your local groomer or veterinarian do it. They need daily checks for ticks and foxtails when these health risks are in season. Unless you provide them with large raw bones to keep their teeth clean, or brush their teeth daily, they will need periodic dental care from a veterinarian.

Don't buy a Leonberger if you cannot afford to buy, feed and provide healthcare for one. The care that goes into keeping the Leonberger breed sound and healthy cannot be done cheaply; therefore, they are relatively expensive dogs when purchased from an LCA approved breeder. They are large dogs, which means that the monthly food bills are considerable. (This also means that the yard pick-up chore is sometimes considerable). Spaying and neutering, as well as any other type of surgery, are more expensive for large dogs because the anesthesia charge is proportional to body weight. Actually, almost everything seems to be a little more expensive (crates, dog beds, food bowls, etc. for large dogs than smaller ones).

Don't buy a Leonberger if you don't like daily exercise. They need to have at least 2 half hour daily walks, or one of about an hour, every day. They thrive on play sessions with other dogs, but are perfectly happy to play with you. Most Leonbergers love to swim and including water in their daily exercise keeps them very happy. Exercising your dog well will prevent a lot of problems that can occur when dogs are bored and have no outlet for their energy. Even a well-trained dog will misbehave when they don't receive enough exercise (excessive barking, charging fences, jumping up on people, digging, chewing inappropriately, etc.).

Don't buy a Leonberger if you are not willing to answer the "What kind of dog is that?" question at least 20 times/week (sometimes 20 times/walk).

Don't buy a Leonberger if you don't believe in providing them with a home for their entire lifetime. Be sure to contact your breeder with any questions or problems in raising your Leonberger to be the companion dog that he/she was meant to be. Make sure to make arrangements for your dog if you should pre-decease him/her or become terminally ill.



BUYER BEWARE

When buying a Leonberger in North America, only a LCA registered kennel that bred the litter following the LCA breeding regulations can automatically ensure full registration of the dog with the LCA. Only registration through the LCA, insures that your dog's Sire and Dam have passed the necessary tests and were breedable according to the rules and regulations of the LCA. All LCA registered kennels have agreed to abide by the LCA breeding regulations. However, member kennels are independent entities and the LCA cannot supervise nor guarantee the ethical practices of its breeders nor the product of any breeding program.

Leonberger should NEVER be found in a petstore or sold through internet-petsites! Our LCA breeders do not sell their puppies to pet stores or via internet brookers! If you see a Leonberger in a pet store, please contact LeoRescue immediately! www.leonberger.com/LeoRescue.