

Welcome to the Wonderful World of Westies

You will find Westies to be extremely active and very intelligent. They are part of the Terrier group and have your basic Terrier temperament. Terriers are notorious for having a very high opinion of themselves and demonstrate this charming trait many times throughout the day!

The Canadian Kennel Club standard defines the West Highland White Terrier as follows:

"The West Highlander is not an argumentative Terrier but is a plucky individual who will not back down and who will stand against a larger animal in a matter of moral rights; yet he is fun loving and a very devoted companion. General Appearance of the West Highland White Terrier is that of a small, gamey, well-balanced hardy-hooking Terrier exhibiting great showmanship and possessed with no small amount of self esteem....."

After owning a Westie you will realize how true these words are. Westies are a joy to own and will be a very obedient and loving dog if you teach it to be. They are extremely intelligent and learn very quickly, however, they will always attempt to get the upper hand unless you are firm.

Usually if you just raise your voice, when they are misbehaving, they will stop. In case of them doing something seriously wrong, a firm rap under the chin is enough. Please remember that your puppy is just like a baby. It is learning daily and testing you to find out how much it can get away with. Be patient, but Firm, and Loving. It will pay off in the end.

The Westie is big enough to really be a dog, but small enough to go in the car or to share your easy chair. They are often described as having a big dog ego in a little dog package. He enjoys outdoors, regardless of weather, but adapts nicely to a small apartment. His beautiful white coat is easy to keep clean with a brush. He is virtually shedless and does not develop "doggy odor." He looks like a stuffed toy, but he is wonderfully alive. He is fine-tuned to everything around him. Nothing new escapes his interested investigation, from the new trash can in the garage to the new clock on the mantel shelf.

Basically, the Westie disposition is sweet, loving, and loyal, but he is not at all subservient. People who want a lie-at-your-feet-type dog would not want a Westie. If a Westie wants your attention and affection, he may climb into the middle of your newspaper or poke his head under the bottom of it, wearing the pages draped over his ears.

As the breed standard says, he has "no small amount of self esteem." It would never occur to him that you might be too occupied to pet him. A Westie has a great sense of personal worth, which is one of his most endearing qualities. When a guy knows he's great, it's hard to be humble!

The Westie is highly intelligent and learns very quickly. He is too intelligent to be argumentative, but he will never back off from a fight, if someone else wants to start one, no matter how large the aggressor. He is a positive thinker and has a great heart in that small body. He knows his moral rights and will always defend them. I often say that if you own a Westie, you do not need a big dog, because a Westie thinks that he is one. He is a happy combination of powerhouse and pussycat!

IF YOU HAVE SMALL CHILDREN AT HOME..... Never leave a young puppy alone with a young child. Children have no sense of right and wrong with young animals. Puppies are not TOYS. If you want a puppy for a young child please buy a stuffed dog for them until they are older. Young children would not be able to appreciate a dog at an early age and the puppy can be done irreparable harm by a young child.

Supervise the play between children and puppies. Children **MUST** be taught how to handle an animal. They are not born with this knowledge. They need to know that pulling a tail on a puppy hurts and that any dog, if cornered, will bite, or scratch in an effort to protect itself. This does not mean the puppy is vicious or aggressive. It is merely its only way to keep from getting hurt. How you treat your puppy now will affect what kind of dog he grows up to be. Treat it with love and kindness and you will be repaid a thousand fold!

DOG FANCIERS OF THE FUTURE ARE MADE, NOT BORN

Westie Facts:

1. Dogs grow to be about 11 inches high (at the shoulder), Bitches about one inch less.
2. Westies weigh about 18 lbs. Males being a bit heavier than females
3. Westies were bred to "go to ground" into Fox holes and Badger holds, etc., digging is instinctual for them.
4. Westies are very hardy and do not need pampering. Although very affectionate, and always on the lookout for hugs and cuddles, they are not a "lap" dog.
5. Westies are not surgically altered when they are born. Their ears naturally stand up although some take longer than others. Look for those inquisitive ears and eyes, the head tilt, and the carrot tail.
6. They are naturally inquisitive, and very protective of their homes. They will always alert you to anyone coming to the door, etc. They have the bark of a much larger animal and I would certainly not try to break into a house if I heard them on the other side!
7. They are great with children and very protective.

