



BREED COLUMNS

HERDING GROUP

anyone who is training in any of the dog sports. Stubborn? Not at all. Yet the puppy was quickly characterized by an overwhelming number of group members as being stubborn, and that it was “the breed”—stubborn.

It is important that long-time fanciers of any breed join some of their local breed Facebook pages if nothing more than to be a persistent source of *correct* breed information, whether in terms of training tips for the breed, health concerns, salient breed characteristics, or referrals to knowledgeable training centers.

A recent post characterized the breed as one that bites. Biting is not the same as nipping, and we do have a few Pembrokes who will nip at heels—again, from their herding heritage. And again, suitable, consistent training is all that is needed. Pembrokes need boundaries set and consistently enforced.

Others say that the breed is smart, and there is no doubt about that. A

Pembroke tends to learn quickly when given appropriate training. A Pembroke is also a problem solver, figuring out how to get what he wants. A piece of hot dog that sunk to the bottom of the wading pool at a fun day led one Pembroke to frantically dig to get the hot dog to float to the top, then pushed it to the side to eat it off the side of the pool rather than putting his face in the water to do so. He learned to do this by watching a housemate do the same a few years earlier. Another figured out how to circumvent a temporary fence by going up several deck steps, putting himself between the banisters, and then jumping to the ground to freedom. He proudly led his owner to the escape spot and showed her how to do it! An airline crate inside an ex-pen gave the height needed for one Pembroke to jump onto it, then onto the kitchen counter—then onto the floor and freedom. Never underestimate a Pembroke!

The AKC Canine College now has a course available on the breed: https://www.caninecollege.akc.org/visitor_catalog_class/show/1128884

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Pulik

WINTER WEATHER AND YOUR PULI

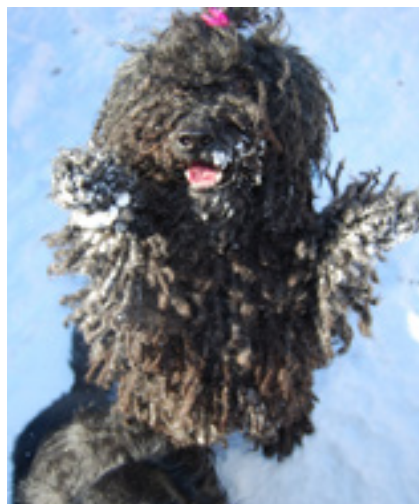
Given the opportunity, your Puli likely enjoys running through the snow, rolling in it, and eating snowflakes. If fully corded, the crisp air that winter brings is most definitely enjoyed by this breed. (I affectionately refer to cold temperatures as “Puli weather.”)

However, while cold air and snow can be fun, it is important to remember that as a Puli owner, you still need to pay attention to how winter weather might impact your dog. For example, the Jan 1974 issue of the AKC Gazette relates a story of three Pulik sent outdoors

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Like many dogs, most Pulis enjoy being out in the snow—but preparedness on the owner's part is essential to protect vulnerable (or any!) dogs from the cold.

unsupervised in Wisconsin, with one dog venturing out on the first crust of ice bordering the lake on the owners' property and falling through the ice. Luckily, the

youngest Pulis of the three alerted the owners with its alarm barking, and the Pulis was pulled out of the freezing water with no major ill effects.

What happens physiologically with your dog during cold weather? Strenuous exercise in dogs (as with humans), particularly while breathing cold air, results in heat and moisture being lost from the surface of the lower airways of the lungs, resulting in mucosal cooling and desiccation. The combination of exercise and living in a cold environment dramatically increases a dog's daily water requirement.

Studies also suggest that dogs subject to low-temperature exposure need two to three times the normal calories as they need at a more moderate temperature. However, that depends on the activity level of your dog. Less exercise means less calorie expenditure. When dogs are expending fewer calories, they need less food (and treats!).

Is your dog getting enough

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exercise during colder weather? Very often the level of exercise is likely reflected more by the owner's willingness to brave weather conditions more than the dog's willingness.

Pay attention to your dog and your surroundings. Icy conditions are hard to manage with the likelihood of slipping, falling, or injury to the footpads. Human feet would quickly freeze if exposed to snow and ice without proper footwear. The pads of a dog's feet aren't protected by fur like the rest of their bodies, but there is a countercurrent heat-exchanger (that is, arterial and venous vessels enmeshed with one another) in the footpad. This way, dogs' internal body heat is not lost through the soles of their feet. Instead, cold blood is warmed right in their paws before it re-enters the main blood supply. Plus, most of the core body blood recirculates back into the body, instead of straight to the feet, to keep the animals' temperature consistently warm even

when walking on ice.

One of the biggest nightmares for anyone with a corded Puli is when the dreaded (pardon the pun) snowballs form on the legs and between the toes. While outside running around, your dog's body is generating body heat. The snow attaches to the dog's long hair, melts from the body heat, and forms snow/ice balls that grow larger. Snowballs also can form underneath the paw-pads which they will then be walking on, compacting the snow even more into their fur. This can be painful and distressing for your dog. Dogs often throw themselves to the ground trying to chew them out as fast they can. It is generally recommended not to pull out snowballs by hand or let your dog chew them out. Pulling and chewing the snowballs will pull the hair which can be painful and cause more irritation to the paws. The licking can tear the stressed skin and can create pathways for

infection, including yeasty feet.

So what can you do? Prevention is the best strategy. The AKC provides some good winter dog care and gear tips [here](#). Some of the tips below include information mentioned by the AKC:

- You could invest in dog boots to combat snowballs on dog paws. The problem with using dog boots is that most dogs don't like wearing them, and some won't even walk with them on. If you plan on trying them, be sure to give your dog some time to get used to wearing before you send them out in the snow, and reward them well (i.e., don't wait until that snow hits to ask your dog to wear boots for the first time).
- Paw balm, or paw wax, is another great way to protect your dog's paws from snow, ice, and road salt, which is sharp and often combined with harsh chemicals. (Not only is it an irritant, but it's also potentially toxic if ingested.) The balm will

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protect a barrier between the hair on the paws and the snow, so the snow won't collect in between the pads and on the hair. I did read elsewhere that some people use Vaseline or non-stick spray Pam (or even Crisco!) on paws, but those options seem like a bad choice since they would make the paws slick on ice (not to mention the mess you'd have on your floors).

- Dog pants or a dog snowsuit are not insulated yet provide protection from snow (they would help to prevent snowball formation in the cords and would keep snow from melting into the cords).

- Using warm water to melt snowballs is not really a great option if you have a corded Puli, since the cords don't dry quickly, and you don't want to create a potentially yeasty situation.

- Use a hair-dryer to melt down the snowballs (knowing how most Pulik feel about hair-dryers, this also is probably not the best option for snowball removal).

It is critical to remember that weather extremes are especially hard on very young and senior dogs. Puppies, canine senior citizens, and dogs with underlying health problems cannot regulate their body temperatures as well as healthy dogs in the prime of their lives. An old dog may show signs of a restricted, stiff gait that are especially evident during cold weather. In short, be sure to protect vulnerable (or any!) dogs from the cold.

Given the extreme weather patterns in recent years (for example, the Texas "Snowmageddon," when there was no power or heat for much of a week), it would be good for all of us to consider emergency preparedness. The AKC has prepared an informative page: <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/keep-dog-warm-without-power/>

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Shetland Sheepdogs

WHAT IS EXPRESSION?

Understanding Sheltie expression is paramount when evaluating a Sheltie, whether for purchase, breeding, or judging.

Is expression just the eyes to you, or is it the sum total of the components of the head? How much do the ears play into the effect of how the dog appears to you?

Is expression just the size, shape, set, and color of the eyes, or is there something deeper in the soul of the dog that can be read there?

Sheltie expression is referred to in the standard as "alert, gentle, intelligent and questioning, watchful and reserved toward strangers, but no fear." How can a dog look alert, but gentle, and intelligent, but questioning at the same time? All these things must be apparent while evaluating Sheltie expression.

The Sheltie expression is not that of a terrier who is hoping that squirrel will come just a step or two further down the tree. It is not