



Whitehouse Malinois



A U.S. Air Force Belgian Malinois atop an M2A3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle in Iraq in 2007.

Chapter 59

Tervuren (Belgian Shepherd Dog)

The **Tervuren** /tər'vʃʊrən/ (sometimes spelled *Tervueren*), is a member of the **Belgian Shepherd** family of **dog breeds**, named after a **village** in **Belgium**. Its classification varies, being classified under some **breed standards** as a breed in its own right, and in others as one of several acceptable variations of the Belgian. It is usually listed within breed standards under one or other, or a combination, of these names.

In the **United States**, since 1960, the **AKC** recognizes it under the name **Belgian Tervuren**. Prior to that date, all recognized varieties of the Belgians were called Belgian Sheepdog.

In Canada, the **Canadian Kennel Club** recognizes the Tervuren as a variety of the Belgian Shepherd (prior to 2005, Belgian Shepherd Dogs were called Belgian Sheepdogs).*[1]

59.1 Description

Like all four of the Belgian Shepherds, the Tervuren is a medium-sized, square-proportioned dog in the **Herding dog** group. Males stand between 24 and 26 inches, and weigh approximately 65 lb. Females are finer and smaller. It is recognized by its thick double coat, generally mahogany with varying degrees of black overlay (completely missing overlay on males is a serious fault), including a **black mask**. A small patch of white on the chest is permissible, as well as white tips on toes. The Tervuren may also be sable or grey, but this may be penalized in the show ring in some countries according to the standard of the registering body. While the **FCI** permits any type of red (mahogany) coat including pale yellow (sand colour) and grey the **AKC** has stricter rules regarding colour. While the **FCI** states that fawn/mahogany is to be preferred, grey colour is a fault under **AKC** rules.

59.2 Temperament

Tervurens are highly energetic, intelligent dogs who require a job to keep them occupied. This can be herding, obedience, agility, flyball, tracking, or protection work. They are also found working as Search and Rescue (SAR) dogs, finding missing people and avalanche victims. Tervurens that are not kept sufficiently busy can become hyperactive or destructive.

As companion animals, Tervurens are loyal and form strong bonds with their family, leading some to be shy around strangers. They are good watch dogs, being very observant and attentive to the slightest change in their environment. Some can be nervous, depending on breeding and early experiences, so care must be taken to adequately socialize Tervuren puppies to a wide variety of people and situations.

As with all the **Belgian Shepherds**, Tervurens are not generally recommended to first-time dog owners due to their high maintenance level.

Their appearance projects alertness and elegance. The breed is known for its loyalty and versatility. Those who own them report being charmed by their intelligence, and trainability.

59.3 Activities

Tervuren can compete in dog agility trials, obedience, showmanship, flyball, Schutzhund, tracking, and herding events. Herding instincts and trainability can be measured at noncompetitive herding tests. Belgian Shepherds exhibiting basic herding instincts can be trained to compete in herding trials.*[2]

59.4 Health

Generally healthy, but Tervurens can have a susceptibility to hip dysplasia, epilepsy, gastric problems (including bloats and torsions) and some eye and skin problems.

59.5 Grooming

The Tervuren has a thick, double coat similar to the Groenendael. Regular brushing is necessary to remove loose undercoat, but in general, the fur is not prone to matting but occasionally, they can get hairballs. A properly textured Tervuren coat is slightly hard,*[3] laying flat against the body (unlike, for instance, the Samoyed's off-standing fur). It naturally sheds dirt and debris, but burrs and seeds may stick to the feathering on the legs.

The Tervuren is shown in a natural state, with minimal trimming and cosmetic products. Bathing, brushing, and trimming the fur on the feet with scissors to emphasize their tight, cat-footed shape is the extent of most exhibitors' grooming routines. Products that alter the coloration of the coat and masking are not allowed in the ring.

59.6 Faults (AKC)

Padding, hackneying, weaving, crabbing and similar movement faults are to be penalized according to the degree with which they interfere with the ability of the dog to work.

In his relationship with humans he is observant and vigilant with strangers, but not apprehensive. He does not show fear or shyness. He does not show viciousness by unwarranted or unprovoked attack. He must be approachable, standing his ground and showing confidence to meet overtures without himself making them. With those he knows well, he is most affectionate and friendly, zealous for their attention and very possessive.*[4]

59.7 Famous Tervuren

- For the film *The Company of Wolves* the wolves are primarily played by dyed Tervurens.
- Wellard from *EastEnders*.*[5]
- A Tervuren is featured in *Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London* as a test subject for a mind-control device.
- A Tervuren is also featured in *Friday Night Dinner* as neighbour Jim's dog, Wilson
- A Tervuren is featured in *Inspector Lewis* Season 1 Episode *Sons of the Twice Born*

59.8 See also

- Belgian Shepherd
- Belgian Shepherd Dog (Groenendael)
- Belgian Shepherd Dog (Laekenois)
- Belgian Shepherd Dog (Malinois)
- Schipperke

59.9 References

- [1] “Update: Recognition of New Breeds” . *CKC News*. The Canadian Kennel Club. 2005-11-11. Retrieved 2008-12-17.
- [2] Hartnagle-Taylor, Jeanne Joy; Taylor, Ty (2010). *Stockdog Savvy*. Alpine Publications. ISBN 978-1-57779-106-5.
- [3] “Breed standard” . American Belgian Tervuren Club. Retrieved 4 April 2015.
- [4] Belgian Tervuren Standard (AKC)
- [5] EastEnders

59.10 External links

- Tervuren (Belgian Shepherd Dog) at DMOZ





Infini Toujours Jeune

A Belgian Tervuren doing agility.



A fairly light-coloured Tervuren

Chapter 60

Bergamasco Shepherd

The **Bergamasco** is a breed of dog with its origins in the Italian Alps near Bergamo, where it was originally used as a herding dog.

60.1 Appearance

The Bergamasco is used in herding and guarding sheep and cattle. This ancient dog breed is found in the Italian Alps, especially in the region of Bergamasca valley. The Bergamasco should be a medium size dog, well-proportioned and harmonious, having a rustic appearance. The Bergamasco has a square body. It is a solidly compact dog with a strong, powerful build that gives it great resistance without taking away any of its agility and speed of movement. Males weigh 32–38 kilograms (71–84 lb) and females weigh 26–32 kilograms (57–71 lb). Their height is around 54–62 centimetres (21–24 in) and the life expectancy is 13–15 years. The rims of its lips are well pigmented, and it has a scissor bite. Its skull is broad and the eyes are dark chestnut color, ears are set high. Its back is straight and well-muscled. Its coat is dense abundant, long and dense, and the texture is harsh. Its undercoat is short and dense. Its muscles are well developed. In action the dog wags his tail. This breed of dog can easily run long distances for a comparatively long time. ^[1]

60.2 Coat and color

The breed's most distinctive feature is the unusual felted coat, a normal and healthy characteristic of the breed. The coat is characterized by three types of hair: a fine, dense, oily undercoat, long harsher hairs similar to a goat's and a top woolly outer-coat. ^[2] The three types of hair weave together as the dog gets older to form flat mats or flocks. The mats start from the spine and go down the flanks, growing every year to reach the ground. The color of the coat can be anything from an appearance of gray or silver gray (in fact a merle) to a mixture of black to coal, with brown shades also intermixed. These colors may have served as a camouflage when working in the mountains. Bergamascos are born with short, smooth fur, which slowly develops the characteristic mats as the dog grows. The coat is solid grey or with grey patches of all possible shades from a most delicate grey to a brighter shade of grey on to black; Isabel and light fawn shades are permitted. An all-black coat is allowed providing the black is really opaque. An all-white coat is prohibited. White patches are tolerated as long as their surface is not more than a fifth of the total surface of the coat. ^[3]

60.3 Temperament

The Bergamasco is an alert, observant and patient dog breed with good self-control and balance. This breed is suited even as a guard and companion dog. The Bergamasco establishes close bond with his owner. Aggressive or overly shy behavior is a fault.



Bergamasco is a medium size dog with a rustic appearance

60.4 Activities

Bergamasco can compete in **dog agility trials**, **obedience**, **showmanship**, **flyball**, **tracking**, and **herding events**. **Herding** instincts and trainability can be measured at noncompetitive herding tests. Bergamasco exhibiting basic herding instincts can be trained to compete in herding trials.* [4] The Bergamasco is still used in the Alps in Italy and in Switzerland to herd cattle. The cattlemen just let the dog go and the dog brings the herd back to the stable without human supervision. Bergamascos are often photographed herding sheep, but they are actually superb cattle dogs, who can perform in a mountain environment.

60.5 Health

Health information for this breed is sparse. The only health survey appears to be a 2004 UK Kennel Club survey, which had a sample size of 0 deceased dogs and 10 living dogs, far too few dogs from which to draw any conclusions.* [5]



Bergamasco with puppies

60.6 See also

- Komondor
- Puli

60.7 References

- [1] [FCI-Standard N° 194 / 01. 06. 1992 /GB]
- [2] “Dog Breeds Expert Website: Bergamasco Sheepdog” . Dog-breeds-expert.com. 2013-11-01. Retrieved 2014-01-01.
- [3] Renna, Christine Hartnagle (2008). *Herding Dogs: Selecting and Training the Working Farm Dog*. Kennel Club Books (KCB). ISBN 978-1-59378-737-0.
- [4] Hartnagle-Taylor, Jeanne Joy; Taylor, Ty (2010). *Stockdog Savvy*. Alpine Publications. ISBN 978-1-57779-106-5.
- [5] “Kennel Club/British Small Animal Veterinary Association Scientific Committee. 2004. Purebred Dog Health Survey. Retrieved July 5, 2007” . Thekennelclub.org.uk. Retrieved 2014-01-01.

60.8 External links

- Pastore Bergamasco video
- International Bergamasco Sheepdog Association
- Bergamasco Sheepdog Club of America
- Bergamasco Sheepdog Association of Canada



Bergamasco in the Italian Alps at work

Chapter 61

Berger Blanc Suisse

The **Berger Blanc Suisse** (English: Swiss White Shepherd, **German**: *Weisser Schweizer Schäferhund*, **Italian**: *Pastore Bianco Svizzero*) is a breed of dog from Switzerland. It is of the same origins as the **White Shepherd** and the **German Shepherd Dog**, and has been recognized as a separate breed by the FCI.

61.1 History

The first German Shepherd Dog registered by the Society for German Shepherd Dogs (*Verein für deutsche Schäferhunde*) was Horand Von Grafrath. Neither he nor any of his documented progeny were white, although his great-grand sire on his mother's side was white.* [1]

At the creation of the German Shepherd Dog breed, all colours were accepted. It was in the first decades of the 20th century that the white exemplars began to be excluded in Europe.

The first White Shepherd club was founded during the 1970s in America. Meanwhile, the breed appeared again in Europe, at first in Switzerland, then **Denmark** and **Germany** came next. Slowly, the European cynological societies began to open their stud books to the White Shepherd.

The white-coated dog *Lobo*, born in the U.S. in 1966, was registered in Switzerland. The *Berger Blanc* (English: White Shepherd) breed was recognized in Switzerland 1991 and in the Netherlands in 1992. The **Czech Republic**, **Austria** and Denmark also recognized the breed.

61.2 Temperament

Most Berger Blanc Suisse dogs are gentle, very intelligent and learn easily. They are loyal to their family and may be wary around strangers, but are not to show shy or fearful behavior. Some people think the **Arctic Wolf** was mixed with the breed to create its caution, however this is not true. The Berger Blanc Suisse breed derived from decades of evolution to a distinct breed type from the German Shepherd Dog. The Berger Blanc Suisse are suited for a variety of services to man from search and rescue to medical alert to therapy. They are also structured and have temperaments to succeed at performance events such as: obedience, rally, agility, lure coursing, barn hunt (ratting), protection sports, dock diving, fly ball, truffling, and other scent/tracking oriented training. They are natural herders, can cart, and are very well suited as an all around utility farm dog.

The character of the Berger Blanc Suisse is gentler and mellower than that of the working lines of German Shepherd Dog, but are still very protective of their people and dog pack.

61.3 Activities

Berger Blanc Suisse can compete in dog agility trials, obedience, showmanship, flyball, tracking, and herding events. **Herding** instincts and trainability can be measured at noncompetitive herding tests. Berger Blanc Suisse exhibiting basic herding instincts can be trained to compete in herding trials.* [2]



Berger Blanc Suisse

61.4 References

- [1] http://www.pedigreedatabase.com/german_shepherd_dog/dog.html?id=1208



Berger Blanc Suisse in the snow

[2] Hartnagle-Taylor, Jeanne Joy; Taylor, Ty (2010). *Stockdog Savvy*. Alpine Publications. ISBN 978-1-57779-106-5.

61.5 External links

- Pastore Svizzero Bianco
- <http://whiteswiss shepherd.org>

Chapter 62

Berger Picard

The **Berger Picard** (pronounced “Bare-ZHAY Pee-CARR”) or **Picardy Shepherd** is a French breed of dog of the herding group of breeds. These dogs nearly became extinct after both World War I and World War II* [1] and remain a rare breed. This breed of dog is people-oriented, loyal, and can make a good family pet if properly socialized early in life.

The producers of the 2005 American movie *Because of Winn-Dixie* brought five Picards over from Europe (“Scott” , “Laiko” and “Tasha” performed in the movie). The trainer wanted a dog that resembled the scruffy mutt on the original book's cover but needed several that looked alike so that production could continue smoothly, thus he decided on this rare purebred dog from France. It is this breed's rustic mutt-like appearance that has prevented it from being rapidly popularized and exploited in the United States by the movie release, as has been the fate of some other breeds. People are often fooled into thinking “Winn-Dixie” is a mixed breed.* [2]

Like any breed of dog, the Picardy Shepherd is not for everyone, and much thought must be devoted to choosing the right dog. As more Picard puppies are imported into the US from France and other countries, it is important that owners and future breeders remain responsible; they will determine the fate of this breed in the United States. In 2006 the **Berger Picard Club of America** was formed to help promote and protect this breed. The Berger Picard will be fully recognized in the herding group by the American Kennel Club on July 1, 2015.

62.1 Appearance

The Berger Picard is a medium-sized, well-muscled dog, slightly longer than tall with a tousled yet elegant appearance. Their ears are naturally erect, high-set and quite wide at the base. Their eyebrows are thick, but do not shield their dark frank eyes. They are known for their smile. Their natural tail normally reaches to the hock and is carried with a slight J-curve at the tip. Their weather-proof coat is harsh and crisp to the touch, not excessively long with a minimal undercoat. Coat colors fall into two colors, fawn and brindle with a range of shade variations.* [3]

62.2 Temperament

The Berger Picard's attributes include a lively, intelligent personality and a sensitive and assertive disposition that responds quickly to obedience training. By and large, Picards are laid back and mellow but they are known for having a stubborn streak and being reserved towards strangers. They require a lot of socialization during the first two years of their lives.

Picards are energetic and hard working, alert, loyal and sweet-tempered with children. They are happiest when they have a job to do. They also have a protective nature, making them good guard dogs. However, they are not excessive barkers. Some Picards are notoriously picky eaters, and it may be difficult to decide on a diet that you and the dog agree on.

The breed also has a well-developed sense of humor, making them an endearing companion, and they continue to be used very effectively as both sheep and cattle herder in their native land and elsewhere.* [4]

Like many herding breeds, Picards require human companionship and lots of it. Since they can be demonstrative



Picards of both colors

to their owners and enthusiastic friends towards other animals, formal obedience training and plenty of positive socialization is a must. Athletic, loyal and filled with a desire to work a long day, the breed excels in any “job” as long as enthusiasm and praise is a part of the task.

62.3 Health

Berger Picards due to lack of over breeding are a relatively healthy breed. Hip dysplasia is known, as are several eye disorders, including progressive retinal atrophy or PRA. A reputable breeder will have hips certified by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) or by PennHip with the results posted at the [OFA database](#). Eyes will be certified for hereditary diseases through the OFA as well (previously through the Canine Eye Research Foundation) and results should also be published on the OFA database.

The Berger Picard also participates in the [Canine Health Information Center](#). To obtain a CHIC number, dogs must have their hips and eyes checked with the results published on the OFA website and their blood banked for DNA plus one elective, either elbows, thyroid or heart evaluated.

The breed's life expectancy is 12 to 14 years.*[2]

62.4 Care

62.4.1 Exercise and activities

Bred to work the fields, Picards are very athletic and revel in exercise. A good deal of exercise is therefore a must for this breed. Otherwise boredom will give way to destructive behavior and rowdy play. They enjoy swimming, running beside a bike, and nice long walks. The Berger Picard makes an excellent jogging companion. The breed's intelligence and sensitivity have made it increasingly popular in dog sports such as agility trials, Tracking, obedience, showmanship, Schutzhund, Flyball, Lure coursing, French Ring Sport and herding events. Herding instincts and trainability can be measured at noncompetitive herding tests. Berger Picards exhibiting basic herding instincts can be trained to compete in herding trials.*[5]



62.4.2 Living conditions

Despite being more suited for being outdoors, Picards can do surprisingly well in city life provided they are given enough energy-releasing exercise. However, the Picard always tries to stay close to its owner and family, so when given a choice between being alone in a big yard or inside with its master the Picard would rather be with his “shepherd.” Inside the house the Picard is usually a very quiet dog, waiting for its time to go out to run, play and sniff around.

They are very loyal and enjoy a lot of attention and may suffer from separation anxiety (even if being left alone inside for short periods of time).

62.4.3 Grooming

The Berger Picard is a low maintenance dog. The rough, tousled coat can mat if not brushed on a regular basis (once every other week) but the coat does not require special care to yield its rustic appearance. Bathing is rarely done. Their fur should never be trimmed except maybe hand stripping the ears. They are light shedders and have little “doggie odor” .

62.5 History

Thought to be the oldest of the French Sheepdogs, the Berger Picard was brought to northern France and the Pas de Calais, in the 9th century by the Franks.* [1]

Some experts insist that this breed is related to the more well-known Briard and Beauceron, while others believe it shares a common origin with Dutch and Belgian Shepherds. Although the Berger Picard made an appearance at the first French dog show in 1863, the breed's rustic appearance did not lead to popularity as a show dog.* [4]

The breeding stock of the Berger Picard, was decimated by the ravages of World War I and World War II. With its population concentrated on the farms of north-eastern France, trench warfare in the Somme reduced the breed to near extinction.* [1]

The Picard's easy care and mellow, yet mischievous, temperament have started the breed back on the road to recovery. Nevertheless its numbers are still limited, even in its native country. As mentioned previously, today in France there are approximately 3500 dogs and in Germany approximately 500 of this breed. At present there are approximately 400 Berger Picards in the United States and Canada.

In December 2006, the Berger Picard Club of America was formed to protect and promote the breed in the United States. The Berger Picard has been recorded in the Foundation Stock Service of the American Kennel Club since April 2007. On October 12, 2011, the American Kennel Club chose the Berger Picard Club of America as the official parent club, as the breed moves towards full recognition.* [6] At the February 2012 Meeting of the American Kennel Club Board of Directors, the Board voted to move the Berger Picard into the Miscellaneous Group effective January 1, 2013. At the April 22, 2014, The AKC Board voted to approve a request from the Berger Picard Club of America to approve the breed standard submitted as the official breed standard for the Berger Picard breed, move the Berger Picard from the Foundation Stock Service into the Stud Book of the American Kennel Club on June 1, 2015, and approve the Berger Picard to compete in the Herding Group, effective July 1, 2015.* [7]

The Berger Picard is a recognized breed by the Canadian Kennel Club. It is in the Herding Group, Group 7. The Standard for this breed is available through the Canadian Kennel Club, Group 7 breed standards. The national breed club is Berger Picard Club Canada.

62.6 Interesting facts

- Sheepdogs resembling Berger Picards have been depicted for centuries in tapestries, engravings and woodcuts. One renowned painting, in the Bergerie Nationale at Rambouillet, the National Sheepfold of France, dating to the start of the 19th century, shows the 1st Master Shepherd, Clément Delorme, in the company of a medium-sized, strong-boned dog with mid-length crisp coat and naturally upright ears, resembling in many ways a Berger Picard of today.
- The first Berger Picards were shown together in the same class with Beaucerons and Briards in 1863 but it was more than 50 years later in 1925 that the Picard was officially recognized as a breed in France.
- Berger Picards, with their crisp coats, were reportedly used to smuggle tobacco and matches across the Franco-Belgian border. The tobacco would be put in goatskin pouches, hairy side up, and attached to the dog's shaven back. From a distance, dogs carrying such loads would not draw attention, particularly at dusk or at night.
- Berger Picards can be seen in three movies, *Because of Winn Dixie*, *Daniel and the Superdogs* and *Are We Done Yet?*, but Picards are often mistaken for another canine actor, the wire haired Portuguese Podengo Medio.



An old picture of a Berger Picard.

- In 2012, BPCA member and Picard owner Christina Potter wrote a book, *Chester Gigolo: Diary of a Dog Star* (Aperture Press), based on her weekly blog about the antics of her Picard Chester's life and ambitions. Chester has appeared in advertisements for **The Company Store**, **J. Crew** and **Verizon**. Christina proudly donates 10% of royalties to Picard DNA collection and health projects.

62.7 References

- [1] Senecat, J (1979). *The Picardy Shepherd of Yesterday and Today*.
- [2] Berger Picard Club of America
- [3] Les Amis du Berger Picard Club de Race affilié à la Société Centrale Canine
- [4] Jacques SENECAAT Extraits du catalogue de la première Nationale d'Élevage et de sélection MONTILS le 3 septembre 1967
- [5] Hartnagle-Taylor, Jeanne Joy; Taylor, Ty (2010). *Stockdog Savvy*. Alpine Publications. ISBN 978-1-57779-106-5.
- [6] “Minutes of the Board of Directors” (PDF). *AKC.org*. American Kennel Club. October 10–11, 2011. Retrieved 2014-03-09.
- [7] “Minutes of the Board of Directors” (PDF). *AKC.org*. American Kennel Club. April 21–22, 2014. Retrieved 2015-03-17.

62.8 Additional reading

- Herreros, Joel (1997). *The Berger Picard* (in French). De Vecchi. ISBN 2732821802.
- De Wailly, Philippe; Dupont, Alain (1998). *Les Berger Français* (in French). Solar. ISBN 2263026584.

62.9 External links

- Berger Picard Club of America, official AKC Parent Club
- Les Amis du Berger Picard (French Website)
- Berger Picard Club Canada
- American Rare Breed Association

Chapter 63

Berner Niederlaufhund

The **Berner Niederlaufhund** (known in the **United States** as the **Small Bernese Hound**) is a **scent hound** standing around 15 to 23 inches, which originated in **Switzerland**. It is a medium dog that is very powerful, and was used to **hunt** big game. The Berner Niederlaufhund is considered a “Hunting Dog in the Most Specific Meaning of the Word.” ^[1] The Berner Niederlaufhund is considered by many hunters to be the best **hunting dog** in the world. It is a **tri-colored** hound, but one in every 20 or more dogs has a rough coat.

63.1 History

Around the 1900 the hunting activities were restricted to districts and since the hound used till then were too fast for this limited areas it was decided to establish a new type of hound. Using selected specimens of the medium sized Swiss Laufhund a smaller hunting dog was created. On July 1, 1905 the Swiss Niederlaufhund-Club (SNLC) was founded. ^[2]

63.2 Usage

The Swiss Niederlaufhund is an excellent hunting dog used to find and follow a scent even through difficult ground. He hunts really independently. This dog is also often used to pursue and find wounded animals. ^[3]

63.2.1 FCI classification

Group 6 - Scent hounds and related breeds 1. Scent Hounds 2. Scent Hounds hunted on leash 3. Related Breeds

63.3 Description

These dogs ‘height lies between 35 and 43 cm for the males and 33 and 40 for the females. They appear to be square but are a little longer than they are tall and well-structured. The head is well clearly shaped and noble with a friendly and alert expression. The chest. The legs are strong with a robust structure. At a calm pace they carry the tail low, when they run it is a bit lifted. There are four different color variations: the Berner Niederlaufhund, the Jura Niederlaufhund, the Luzerner Niederlaufhund and the Schwyzer Niederlaufhund. The coat can be short and smooth or a bit longer and stiff depending on the type. ^[4]

63.3.1 Berner Niederlaufhund

This type is bred short-haired and wire-haired and always tri-colored. : white, black and maroon. The base color is white with big black spots. Some little spots are allowed. Over the eyes and on the cheeks these dogs have maroon-



Franz Rudolf Frischung in the uniform of an officer of the Bernese Huntsmen Corps with his Berner Laufhund, painted by Jean Preudhomme in 1785

colored spots. A black mantle is allowed. The skin is black pigmented under the dark coat and marbled under the white coat. * [5]

63.3.2 Jura Niederlaufhund

This type usually has a smooth coat. A deep black color with some maroon colored spots over the eyes, on the cheeks, chest and legs is preferred. A maroon base color with a black mantle is also allowed. White spots are tolerated only

on the chest if they are not too big. The skin is dark pigmented under the black coat and paler under the spots.* [6]

63.3.3 Luzerner Niederlaufhund

This type has a smooth, short coat. The base color is white, white and gray mottled or white and black mottled. Some bigger black spots or mantle are allowed. Marooned colored spots over the eyes and on the cheeks can appear. The skin is dark pigmented under the black coat and paler under the mottled coat.* [7]

63.3.4 Schwyzer Niederlaufhund

This type has a smooth coat. The base color is white with reddish colored spots. Some smaller spots and a mantle are allowed. The skin is dark grey colored under the reddish coat and marbled under the white coat.* [8]

63.4 Temperament

The Niederlaufhunde have a great sense of smell, they are fast and agile and passionate hunters which keep good track of the sent they are supposed to follow. Their voice is pleasant. These dogs are friendly and courageous and never aggressive. Some specimens are calmer than others.* [9]

63.5 Internal link

- Schweizer Laufhund

63.6 References

- [1] “Berner Laufhund” . Continental Kennel Club. Retrieved 2012-08-20.
- [2] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [3] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [4] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [5] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [6] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [7] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [8] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund
- [9] de:Schweizerischer Niederlaufhund

Chapter 64

Bernese Mountain Dog

The **Bernese Mountain Dog**, called in German the *Berner Sennenhund*, is a large-sized breed of dog, one of the four breeds of Sennenhund-type dogs from the Swiss Alps. The name *Sennenhund* is derived from the German *Senne* (“alpine pasture”) and *Hund* (“dog”), as they accompanied the alpine herders and dairymen called *Senn*. *Berner* (or *Bernese* in English) refers to the area of the breed’ s origin, in the canton of Bern in Switzerland. This mountain dog was originally kept as a general farm dog. Large Sennenhunde in the past were also used as draft animals, pulling carts. The breed was officially established in 1907.*[3] In 1937, the American Kennel Club recognized it*[4] as a member of the Working Group.*[5]

64.1 Appearance

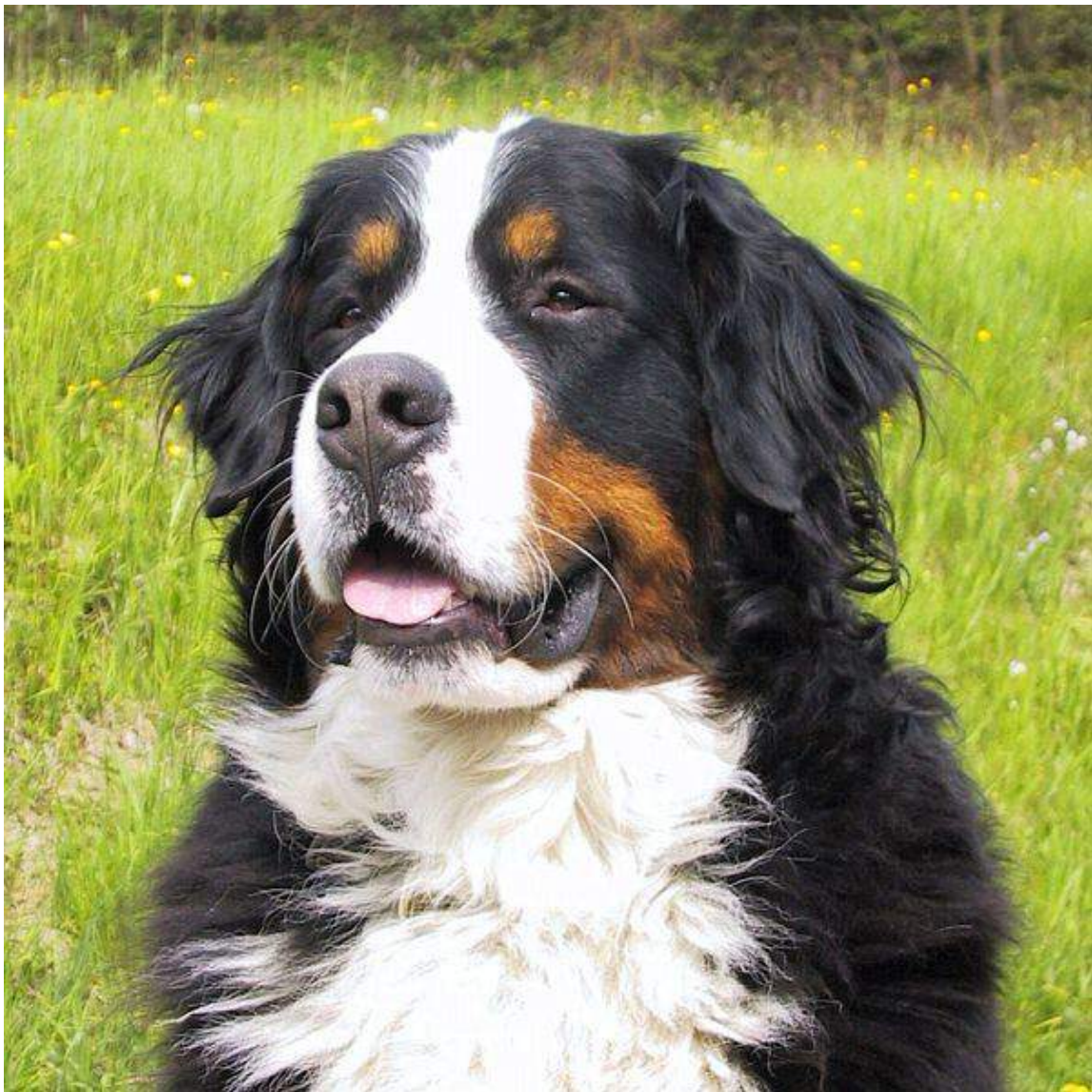


Bernese Mountain Dog

64.1.1 Four breeds of Sennenhund

The four breeds of Sennenhund, with the original breed name, followed by the most popular English version of the breed name:

- Grosser Schweizer Sennenhund, Greater Swiss mountain dog
- Berner Sennenhund, Bernese mountain dog
- Appenzeller Sennenhund, Appenzeller
- Entlebucher Sennenhund, Entlebucher mountain dog



Bernese portrait

64.1.2 Coloring

Like the other Sennenhunde, the Bernese mountain dog is a large, heavy dog with a distinctive tri-colored coat, black with white chest and rust colored markings above eyes, sides of mouth, front of legs, and a small amount around the white chest. An ideal of a perfectly marked individual gives the impression of a white horseshoe shape around the



A 60-pound, eight-month-old Bernese Mountain Dog puppy

nose and a white “Swiss cross” on the chest, when viewed from the front. A “Swiss kiss” is a white mark located typically behind the neck, but may be a part of the neck. A full ring would not meet type standard. The AKC breed standard lists, as disqualifications, blue eye color, and any ground color other than black. * [6] * [7]

64.1.3 Height and weight ranges

Height at the withers is 25–27.5 in (64–70 cm) for males, while it is 23–26 in (58–66 cm) for females. Weight is 80–120 lb (35–55 kg) for males, while it is 75–100 lb (35–45 kg) for females. * [8]

64.1.4 Build and proportions

The Bernese mountain dog is slightly longer than it is tall, and it is highly muscular.

64.1.5 Other physical traits

The head of the Bernese mountain dog is flat on the top with a moderate stop, and the ears are medium-sized, triangular, set high, and rounded at the top. The teeth have a scissors bite. The legs of the Bernese are straight and strong, with round, arched toes. The dewclaws of the Bernese are often removed. Its bushy tail is carried low.

64.2 Temperament

The **breed standard** for the Bernese mountain dog states that dogs should not be “aggressive, anxious or distinctly shy”, but rather should be “good-natured”, “self-assured”, “placid towards strangers”, and “docile”. * [7] The temperament of individual dogs may vary, and not all examples of the breed have been bred carefully to follow the standard. All large breed dogs should be well socialized when they are puppies, and given regular training and activities throughout their lives.

Bernese are outdoor dogs at heart, though well-behaved in the house; they need activity and exercise, but do not have a great deal of endurance. They can move with amazing bursts of speed for their size when motivated. If they are sound (no problems with their hips, elbows, or other joints), they enjoy hiking and generally stick close to their people. * [9] Not being given the adequate amount of exercise may lead to barking and harassing in the Bernese. * [10]

Bernese mountain dogs are a breed that generally does well with children, as they are very affectionate. * [9] They are patient dogs that take well to children climbing over them. * [9] Though they have great energy, a Bernese will also be happy with a calm evening. * [9]

Bernese work well with other pets and around strangers. * [9]

64.3 History

Historically, in some locales at least, the breed was called a *Dürrbachhund*. * [11]

The breed was used as an all purpose **farm dog** for guarding property and to drive dairy cattle long distances from the farm to the alpine pastures. The type was originally called the *Dürrbächler*, for a small town (Dürrbach) where the large dogs were especially frequent. * [12] In the early 1900s, **fanciers** exhibited the few examples of the large dogs at shows in Berne, and in 1907 a few breeders from the Burgdorf region founded the first **breed club**, the *Schweizerische Dürrbach-Klub*, and wrote the first **Standard** which defined the dogs as a separate breed. By 1910, there were already 107 registered members of the breed. There is a photo of a working Bernese Mountain Dog, dated 1905 at the Fumee Fall rest area in Quinnesec, MI.

In the US, the Bernese Mountain Dog is growing in popularity, ranking in 32nd place by the **American Kennel Club** in 2013. * [13]



Benno Adam, Bernese Mountain Dog and Her Pups, 1862

64.4 Health

64.4.1 Medical problems

Cancer is the leading cause of death for dogs in general, but Bernese Mountain Dogs have a much higher rate of fatal cancer than other breeds; in both U.S./Canada and UK surveys, nearly half of Bernese Mountain Dogs die of cancer,*[14]*[15] compared to about 27% of all dogs.*[14] Bernese Mountain Dogs are killed by a multitude of different types of cancer, including malignant histiocytosis, mast cell tumor, lymphosarcoma, fibrosarcoma, and osteosarcoma.*[15] A four-year-old Bernese with lymphoma named Dylan was one of the first dogs to receive chemotherapy at the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, and it was successful.*[16]

Bernese Mountain Dogs also have an unusually high mortality due to musculoskeletal causes. Arthritis, hip dysplasia, and cruciate ligament rupture were reported as the cause of death in 6% of Bernese Mountain Dogs in the UK study;*[14] for comparison, mortality due to musculoskeletal ailments was reported to be less than 2% for pure-bred dogs in general.

Several inherited medical problems that a Bernese Mountain Dog may face are malignant histiocytosis, hypomyelogenesis, progressive retinal atrophy, and possibly cataracts and hypoadrenocorticism.*[17] The breed is also prone to histiocytic sarcoma, a cancer of the muscle tissue that is very aggressive,*[18] and hereditary eye diseases are common among larger dogs.*[19]

Mobility

Owners of Bernese Mountain Dogs are nearly three times as likely as owners of other breeds to report musculoskeletal problems in their dogs.*[14] The most commonly reported musculoskeletal issues are cruciate ligament rupture, arthritis (especially in shoulders and elbows), hip dysplasia, and osteochondritis.*[14]*[15] The age at onset for musculoskeletal problems is also unusually low. For example, in the U.S./Canada study, 11% of living dogs had arthritis



Bernese Mountain Dog puppy

at an average age of 4.3 years. * [15] Most other common, non-musculoskeletal morbidity issues strike Berners at rates similar to other breeds. * [14]

In short, prospective Bernese Mountain Dog owners should be prepared to cope with a large dog that may have mobility problems at a young age. Options to help mobility-impaired dogs may include ramps for car or house access, lifting harnesses and slings, and dog wheelchairs (ex: [Walkin` Wheels](#)). Comfortable bedding may help alleviate joint pain.



Bernese Mountain Dog standing

64.4.2 Life expectancy

Compared to breeds of similar size as well as purebred dogs in general, the Bernese is one of the short-lived dog breeds.*[20]*[21] The average life expectancy of a Bernese Mountain Dog is approximately 7 to 8 years.*[20]*[2] Most other breeds of a similar size have median longevity of 10–11 years.*[22] In a 2004 UK survey, the longest-lived of 394 deceased Bernese Mountain Dogs died at the age of 15.2 years.*[14]

64.5 Care

64.5.1 Activities

The Bernese's calm temperament makes them a natural for pulling small carts or wagons, a task they originally performed in Switzerland. With proper training they enjoy giving children rides in a cart or participating in a parade, such as the [Conway, New Hampshire](#) holiday parade.*[23] The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America offers drafting trials open to all breeds; dogs can earn eight different titles —four as individual dogs (Novice Draft Dog, Advanced Novice Draft Dog, Draft Dog, and Master Draft Dog) and four brace titles, in which two dogs work one cart together. Regional Bernese clubs often offer [carting](#) workshops.*[24]

On July 1, 2010, the Bernese Mountain Dog became eligible to compete in AKC Herding Events. Herding instincts and trainability can be measured at noncompetitive herding tests. Berners exhibiting basic herding instincts can be trained to compete in herding trials.*[25]