

# KELLNHAUS GERMAN SHEPHERD RESOURCES 1B

## FACTS & INFO

### Vital Stats:

<b>Breed Group:</b>	Herding Dogs
<b>Height:</b>	22"-26" at the shoulder.
<b>Weight:</b>	75 to 95 pounds
<b>Life Span:</b>	10 to 14 years



### Personality:

The German Shepherd personality is aloof but not usually aggressive. He's a reserved dog; he doesn't make friends immediately, but once he does, he's extremely loyal. With his family he's easy-going and approachable, but when threatened he can be strong and protective, making him an excellent watchdog. This highly intelligent and trainable breed thrives on having a job to do — any job. The German Shepherd can be trained to do almost anything, from alerting a deaf person to a doorbell ring to sniffing out an avalanche victim. One thing he's *not* good at is being alone for long periods of time. Without the companionship he needs — as well as exercise and the chance to put his intelligence to work — he becomes bored and frustrated. A German Shepherd who's under-exercised and ignored by his family is likely to express his pent-up energy in ways you don't like, such as barking and chewing. Like every dog, the German Shepherd needs early socialization — exposure to many different people, sights, sounds, and experiences — when they're young. Socialization helps ensure that your German Shepherd puppy grows up to be a well-rounded dog.

### Overall Health:

German Shepherds are generally healthy, but like all breeds, they're prone to certain health conditions. Not all German Shepherds will get any or all of these diseases, but it's important to be aware of them if you're considering this breed.

- Hip Dysplasia
- Elbow Dysplasia:
- Bloat
- Degenerative Myelopathy (DM)
- Allergies

## Grooming:

Sometimes jokingly called "German shedders," the breed sheds year-round, and generally "blows" — sheds a lot of hair at once, like a snowstorm — twice a year. If you want a German Shepherd, be prepared for hair on your black pants, on your white couch, and pretty much all over the house. There's no magic solution to shedding. Accept it. However, brushing two to three times a week will help more of the hair come out in a brush, rather than on your furnishings. And a sturdy vacuum cleaner doesn't hurt either. Bathing the dog too often strips the coat of oils that keep it healthy, so start running the bathwater only if your dog really needs it. It shouldn't be that often; despite his notoriety as a shedder, the German Shepherd tends to be fairly clean and odorless. The nails need to be trimmed one to two times a month, and the ears checked once a week for dirt, redness, or a bad odor that can indicate an infection, then wiped out weekly with a cotton ball dampened with gentle, pH-balanced ear cleaner to prevent problems. German Shepherds love to chew, and the habit helps keep their teeth clean. Give them sturdy, safe dental chew toys or bones, and they'll be fighting tartar buildup as they gnaw, especially on the back molars. A raw food diet that includes bone will help with this naturally.

## Feeding:

Dogs are individuals, just like people, and they don't all need the same amount of food. It almost goes without saying that a highly active dog will need more than a couch potato dog. The quality of dog food you buy also makes a difference — the better the dog food, the further it will go toward nourishing your dog and the less of it you'll need to shake into your dog's bowl. If your dog starts to put on weight, cut back; if he looks too thin, add a little more. You'll need to take special care with feeding and exercising a German Shepherd puppy, however. German Shepherds grow very rapidly between the age of four and seven months, making them susceptible to bone disorders. They do well on a high-quality, low-calorie diet (22 to 24 percent protein and 12 to 15 percent fat) that keeps them from growing too fast. And don't let your German puppy run, jump, or play on hard surfaces like pavement until he's at least two years old and his joints are fully formed. It's fine for puppies to play on grass, though, and puppy agility, with its inch-high jumps, is okay. Overfeeding your German Shepherd and letting him pack on the pounds can cause joint problems, as well as other health conditions. Limit treats, keep him active, and serve him regular meals rather than leaving food available at all times.



## Energy Level:



Originally bred to herd flocks all day, German Shepherds are built for action. This means he's got lots of energy that he needs to burn off with daily exercise. If you leave him alone for long periods of time without exercise, expect trouble. Boredom and inactivity lead to behavior problems — chewing, digging, and barking. The German Shepherd desperately needs to exercise both his body (jogging, a romp at the dog park) and his mind (training exercises like agility or obedience competitions). Like many herding breeds, German Shepherds are barkers. Barking isn't necessarily a problem, but it can be if the dog is bored. Learning the "Quiet" command should be part of every German Shepherd's obedience training. German Shepherds like to chew, and their powerful jaws can destroy most materials. If they pick the wrong thing to gnaw on, they can damage their teeth, swallow something that makes them sick, or even choke. Save your dog, and your belongings, by giving him safe chew toys and bones so he can entertain himself when you're not playing with him.

## Trainability:



He's got a reputation for being a great watchdog — and he is — but the German Shepherd should never be chained or tethered just to stand guard. No dog should; it leads to frustration and aggression. The German Shepherd is happiest living indoors with the family, but with access to a large, fenced yard, where he can burn off some of his natural energy. The GSD is not a novice dog owner's breed. Be prepared to put in some serious time training and be willing to hire a professional trainer if necessary.

## Sensitivity



Some dogs will let a stern reprimand roll off their backs, while others take even a dirty look to heart. The GSD is very sensitive and does not respond well to any physical punishment or harsh treatment. Being very social pack participants means that they feel the rejection or anger of their owners deeply. Be very careful to use positive only training methods.

