

The Miniature American Shepherd Club of the USA (MASCUSA) welcomes you.

Congratulations on your purchase of a Miniature American Shepherd puppy. The Miniature American Shepherd is indeed a captivating and versatile breed. Known for its compact size, intelligence, and strong herding instincts, this dog has a rich history rooted in the Australian Shepherd lineage. The breed's origins trace back to the 1960s when breeders in the United States sought to create a smaller version of the Australian Shepherd by selectively breeding smaller dogs within the breed.

Initially called the Miniature Australian Shepherd, these dogs quickly gained popularity, particularly among horse owners, due to their trainable nature, agility, and ability to adapt to life on the road.

In 2011, the American Kennel Club (AKC) officially recognized the Miniature American Shepherd, distinguishing it from its Australian Shepherd counterpart. Despite their smaller size, they maintain the same energy, intelligence, and herding drive as the larger Australian Shepherd, making them ideal for a variety of roles, including herding, agility sports, and as loyal family pets.

Breed Characteristics



The Miniature American Shepherd is known for its strong bond with its family, making it an affectionate and loyal companion. They are generally very good with children and other pets, thanks to their social and gentle nature. However, like many herding breeds, they do

tend to have a reserved attitude toward strangers. This makes them excellent watchdogs, as they are naturally alert and protective of their family, but it also means they may require proper socialization from a young age to prevent excessive wariness of unfamiliar people or situations.

Their deep attachment to their family members is one of the breed's most endearing traits. Many Miniature American Shepherds develop a strong attachment to a single person, becoming known as the "Velcro dog."

This means they will follow their favorite person around

the house, seeking closeness and attention. They thrive on companionship and are happiest when they can be part of daily family activities.

To keep a Miniature American Shepherd happy, regular interaction, exercise, and mental challenges are essential. They excel in activities like obedience training, agility, or herding, and they love participating in family hikes or walks. With the right amount of attention and activity, they are sure to be a loving and devoted addition to any household.

Grooming

This is generally a low maintenance breed. Your dog will shed twice a year, and you'll want to make sure to brush more frequently during that time. Also, you can find a groomer (or you can do it yourself!) to do a "deep clean" bathing and forced air blower dry 2-3 x year.

Herding Instincts and Nipping

Miniature American Shepherds are hardwired to herd, which can sometimes manifest in behaviors like nipping or chasing to control the movement of people or animals. While this is an effective behavior when herding livestock, it can be unpleasant or problematic when directed at family members. For example, your puppy may nip at your heels or try to herd you, particularly if you're moving in a way that excites their herding instincts. It's crucial to recognize and work through herding behaviors. Training, redirection and socialization from an early age can help reduce the intensity of their herding instinct.

Exercise and Mental Stimulation



This breed needs more than just daily walks to stay satisfied. While walks are important, they also need activities that engage their minds. Incorporating games like hide and seek, fetch, disc, and basic

obedience training are excellent ways to both exercise and mentally stimulate your dog. These activities help keep their minds sharp and provide outlets for their herding instincts. Dogs that don't receive enough mental engagement can become bored, which may lead to destructive behavior, such as chewing or digging. If possible, ensure that your Miniature American Shepherd has access to a fenced area where they can safely run off-leash. This allows them to burn off energy and satisfy their need for movement. If you don't have a fenced yard, always keep them on a leash in public spaces to prevent them from chasing after distractions.

Their herding instincts are strong, and they might try to herd other animals or even people if not properly contained. Crate training is an important tool for this breed, as it provides a safe and secure environment for your dog, especially during times of stress such as visits to the vet, emergencies, or boarding situations. When done correctly, crate training can help your dog feel more comfortable in confined spaces, reducing anxiety. However, it's essential to remember that Miniature American Shepherds should not be kept predominantly in a crate. They are highly social dogs that need interaction with their family and plenty of time outside of the crate for exercise and mental stimulation.

Spaying and Neutering

There are numerous positive reasons to spay and neuter your pet. It is also important to discuss and research the decision with the breeder you purchased your puppy from and your vet. Recent studies encourage spaying or neutering your pet around a year and a half to allow for your puppy to mature. One of the greatest benefits of spaying and neutering is that you will not unintentionally add to pet population issues. It is your responsibility to make the best decision for your pet.

Breeding

Breeding is not something to be taken lightly, and it requires careful planning, research, and financial investment. You must understand genetics, suggested health testing (Hip X-Ray testing, genetic testing, etc), and breed standards, as well as be financially prepared for the costs associated with pregnancy, birth, and any potential emergencies. If your breeder cannot help, look into programs like MASCUSA's breeder mentor program to find experienced professionals who can guide you. Responsible breeding aims to improve the breed and ensure the health and well-being of the dogs involved.

Health and Veterinary Care

Your puppy should come with a health record indicating which vaccinations and deworming treatments they have already received. It's important to keep this record updated as you continue your puppy's care. Ensure that you follow up with your veterinarian to complete the necessary vaccinations and deworming schedule based on the recommendations for your area.

If you are unable to keep your Miniature American Shepherd for any reason, please reach out to your breeder.

A responsible breeder will work with you to make sure that a puppy they produce does not end up in a shelter. If they are not able to help you visit <https://mascusa.org/breed/rescue> to see rescues in your area.

The Miniature American Shepherd Club of the USA (MASCUSA) would love to have you as a member of the AKC Parent Club for the Miniature American Shepherd. If you are interested in finding out more and joining other Miniature American Shepherd owners, consider joining MASCUSA. MASCUSA's purpose is to protect and preserve this wonderful breed. MASCUSA is also committed to providing education for members, judges and the public on the correct type, temperament, and grooming techniques.

There are many wonderful opportunities for you and your puppy to explore the wonderful world of dog sports in AKC. As a member of MASCUSA you would be part of a wonderful community of MAS fanciers.

If you would like more information about becoming a member contact memberships@mascusa.org or scan the QR code below:



Resources for more information are available on our website:

www.mascusa.org

