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INDEPENDENCE

Everyone who has Akitas knows that they are independent dogs. This is definitely an inherited component of temperament and very strong in the breed. I don't think this is something anyone breeds for. In some ways, Akita would be more appealing if they were a little less independent, but it is so intrinsic to the breed, it shapes many aspects of their behavior. Without it, we'd have a totally different breed without the reserve and dignity so typical the adult.

I've been around a lot of different dog breeds, but Akitas are one of the only ones I'm sure could be depended on to survive without people, barring encounters with cars about which they seem to have no sense. They are unlikely to do anything reckless or daring; rather, they consider what they are doing and use their experiences to evaluate their actions. In short, the Akita is a survivor, due in large part to his capacity for independent action.

Therefore, leaving the dog outside to fend for itself can make him a poor pet. Akitas need to be around the people in the household to bond with them. Left to their own devices, Akitas will make their own world and rules for living in it.

Mutual respect is the key to working with Akitas. You must be the alpha person, but even so, sooner or later, you'll run up against their independent nature. Pick your battles carefully. If it doesn't really matter, let the dog have his way. He'll be easier to deal with later when something needs to be done your way.