



The Icelandic sheepdog was just accepted into the American Kennel Club in June, 2010. This Nordic herder is just under being considered medium size. It has pointed ears along with a curled tail. Its nose is large and black, and its lips are black too. This breed has strong forelegs. The build of the breed is rectangular which means the body is longer than its height. These dogs have a pleasant, happy and intelligent expression. A lively and confident bearing is normal for this breed. The coat can be either short or long, with both being quite thick and very weatherproof. The sexes do differ in appearance.

### History of the Breed

The breed of the Icelandic sheepdog has its origins in Scandinavia and is a Spitz. Evidence has been found in Sweden and Denmark that this breed goes as far back as 8000 B.C. In 874 AD, as the Vikings sailed to colonize Iceland, they transported their dogs with them. Over time, other dog breeds were imported only in small numbers. From 1901 till now Iceland has severely restricted the import of animals. This has helped keep the Icelandic sheepdog real close to what it was when the Vikings first came to Iceland.

This dog has been a great work dog and has been used to round up livestock. Even though the popularity of the breed has grown over the years the numbers of these dogs are still small today. It is believed to be among one of the oldest dog breeds in the world and is Iceland's only breed that is native.

### Temperament of the Icelandic Sheepdog

These Icelandic sheepdogs are energetic dogs. Their toughness makes them durable. They are good herding dogs because of their agility and hardiness. They are great for herding sheep and other livestock, and their barking comes in handy with these roles. This breed is very alert and will react when visitors are around but will not be violent. It also has strong hunting instincts and ability.

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An Icelandic sheepdog is friendly, playful, pleasant in nature and not fearful. It gets along with other pets, dogs and loves kids. This dog does best when treated with a calm, firm hand. They love to have a duty to perform too.

### Health

This breed is a hardy breed with little health problems. As with all dogs though, bad breeding could cause some. So buy from a reputable breeder. Also make sure the veterinarian is seen once a year.

### Grooming

With its double coat that is very weatherproof, the Icelandic sheepdog needs some grooming. It does need to be brushed to remove any debris and dirt on a regular basis. This brushing will also keep the coat from matting, and make it shine. Check the dog's ears each week and clean them. Also clip its nails at least every other week.

This breed makes an excellent pet and can be trained to be a watchdog. It is a breed that is a joy to own. Think about the Icelandic sheepdog for your next dog.

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## Icelandic Sheepdog

Photo by [Hawthorne Ave](#)

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