

# THE MINIATURE AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD

The medium-length coat of the Miniature Australian Shepherd (North American Miniature Australian Shepherd) is slightly wavy and moderate in length. It comes in blue or red merle, red or black tri-color, all with white and/or tan markings. The hair around the ears and eyes should not be white. The coat may be straight or slightly wavy, and should have feathering on the back of the legs, and a mane and frill around the neck. Hair on the head, front of the forelegs and on the outside of the ears is shorter than the rest of the coat. The hindquarters are the same length as the forequarters. The top of the skull is quite flat and clean cut. The feet are oval and compact. The lips do not hang over the lower jaw.

## **Temperament**

Miniature Australian Shepherds are easy going, perpetual puppies that love to play. Courageous, loyal and affectionate, they are excellent children's companions that are great with active children. A devoted friend and guardian, for they are naturally protective. Very lively, agile, and attentive, they are eager to please with a sixth sense about what the owner wants. Miniature Australian Shepherds are highly intelligent and easy to train. They can become nervous and destructive if left alone too much without exercise. Miniature Australian Shepherds need lots of exercise and a job to do, as the breed is very intelligent, active and easily bored. They are naturally suspicious of strangers, so they should be well socialized as puppies. Some like to nip peoples heels in an attempt to herd them. A fine companion, it also enjoys working small stock. They are quiet workers, unlike some breeds, which are bred to bark constantly at livestock. This breed is not usually dog aggressive.

## **Height, Weight**

Tea Cup - Weight: under 12 pounds (5.5 kg.)

Toy - Height: 10-14 inches (26-36 cm.)

Toy - Weight: 12-17 pounds (5.5-8 kg.)

Miniature - Height: 13-18 inches (33-46 cm.)

Miniature - Weight: 20-40 pounds (9-18 kg.)

## **Health Problems**

The gene for the beautiful merle coloration also carries a blind/deaf factor. This may be expressed only in merle/merle crosses. The vast majority of merled North American Miniature Australian Shepherds are heterozygous merles (one parent is merle the other is solid) and these merles are not at risk for any special health problems due to their coloration. Be sure to check the hearing on merle puppies.

Hip and eye problems can occur. Ensure sire and dam of puppies have been tested and are certified clear prior to purchasing a puppy.

### **Living Conditions**

The Miniature Australian Shepherd will do okay in an apartment if they are sufficiently exercised. They are moderately active indoors and will do okay with a small yard. This breed will do well in cold climates.

### **Exercise**

The Mini Aussie need to be taken on [daily, long walks](#). This energetic little dog needs plenty of vigorous exercise to stay in shape, or better yet, some real work to do.

### **Life Expectancy**

About 12-13 years.

### **Grooming**

The coat of the Miniature Australian Shepherd is easy to groom and needs little attention. Brush occasionally with a firm bristle brush and bathe only when necessary. This breed is an average shedder.

### **Origin**

A breeding program to develop the Miniature Australian Shepherd (North American Miniature Australian Shepherd) was begun in 1968 using small [Australian Shepherds](#). Breeders today continue to strive to produce a mirror image of the Australian Shepherd in a size that fits well into today's lifestyle, without sacrificing instinct, ability or character.

### **Group**

Herding

(taken from [www.dogbreedinfo.com](http://www.dogbreedinfo.com))

