



## Rhodesian Ridgeback Club of Great Britain

# Is a Rhodesian Ridgeback the right breed for you?

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### Responsibilities

If you are thinking of acquiring a Rhodesian Ridgeback for the first time it is important, in common with any breed of dog, to undertake some research beforehand. This will ensure that not only will you have greater understanding of the breed but you will also be better placed to make an informed decision as to whether owning a Rhodesian Ridgeback is compatible with your family responsibilities, domestic circumstances and lifestyle choices. All members of the household should be involved in discussions because the commitment of owning a Rhodesian Ridgeback should be shared by all.

There are several informative books available, including the Rhodesian Ridgeback Club of Great Britain publication 'Guide to the Rhodesian Ridgeback'. Much useful information can also be found through the internet and in the reference department of your local library. However, nothing can surpass seeing the breed in person and speaking to experienced owners and breeders. The best place to view Rhodesian Ridgebacks in significant numbers is at dog shows where most owners will be

only to pleased to talk about their breed. If you are able to speak to more than one owner this will help you to gain a well balanced impression of the breed. Deeper understanding and knowledge can only come from owning a Rhodesian



Ridgeback so if the opportunity arises it is a good idea to visit other Ridgeback owners and see their dogs in the home environment.

### Pack Loyalty

Rhodesian Ridgebacks have a deep sense of loyalty, both to their owners and to the 'pack' if there are other dogs in the household. Within a family setting they usually form a

closer affiliation with one member. They are excellent with children and able to withstand a reasonable degree of rough play. Whilst they are strong, resilient and hardy dogs, Rhodesian Ridgebacks are also quite sensitive creatures and

should not receive any stronger admonishment than a sound telling off. Around the house Rhodesian Ridgebacks are easygoing, somewhat idle dogs, content to doze in a sunny spot or lie in front of the fire. However, they will be transformed into instant action at the sound of a

knock on the door or unfamiliar footsteps outside. After barking to alert their owner to the presence of 'intruders' they will generally relapse into silence, not being given to the constant yapping of some other breeds.

Rhodesian Ridgebacks are by nature 'stand-offish' and somewhat reserved towards those they do not know.

Unfamiliar visitors are viewed with suspicion until properly introduced after which they will be tolerated. This natural suspicion should not be regarded as nervousness, Rhodesian Ridgebacks are not overly friendly dogs and save their affection for the family circle. They are most unlikely to attack anyone without extreme provocation so whilst suitable as watchdogs they are not recommended solely as guard dogs.

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## Love at first sight?

Rhodesian Ridgeback puppies are a delight and it can be difficult to avoid 'love at first sight' when viewing a puppy but it should be borne in mind that within 2 to 3 years it will develop into a large, strong, active and agile adult; males measuring 25ins to 27 ins at the shoulder and females 24 ins to 26 ins.

Puppies should not be over-exercised and for the first six months it is not advisable to let them off the lead when outdoors. Fully matured dogs require a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours exercise per day which should include a combination of free running and road walking.

As with all members of the hound group, Rhodesian Ridgebacks have a well developed hunting instinct and are inclined to chase anything that runs away from them, including other dogs and people so care should be taken before letting them off the lead.

The Rhodesian Ridgeback is an intelligent but independently minded dog. Whilst it is important that they are trained in obedience they should not be expected to possess the natural and instant submission that is characteristic of Working Breeds, e.g. German Shepherds and Border Collies. Rhodesian Ridgebacks are extremely

intelligent and learn quickly but they can become easily bored with repetitive training exercises and having the hound temperament can also prove quite stubborn. Training is therefore best interspersed with play, with rewards being readily available. It should always be remembered that Rhodesian Ridgebacks are partners not servants.

Being a short haired breed Rhodesian Ridgebacks do not require excessive grooming but a daily brush is recommended because apart from keeping the coat in good condition this helps to strengthen the bond between dog and owner. They usually moult twice a year, dead hairs being best removed by use of a pimpled glove.

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## Joy & Privilege

Owning a Rhodesian Ridgeback is a joy and a privilege that only those who have experienced it will appreciate. However, it is a two-way contract so think carefully before you enter into it. Are you able at this time in your life to devote the time and effort needed in raising a large extrovert hound or would the companionship you are seeking be better served by another breed?

Only you can answer the question.

