

TIBBIE TIPS



We hope that these tips about Tibetan Spaniels (Tibbies for short) may help you foster or place a Tibbie in your care.

Is it a Tibbie? Tibbies aren't well known. 99.9% of people think they're Pekingese or mixes. Sometimes pure-bred Tibbies are misidentified as mixes. Conversely, mixes such as Peke-Poms are sometimes misidentified as Tibbies. TSCA Rescue can provide expert opinion if needed.

Intelligence and Independence Tibbies are intelligent and independent-minded. We even have a name for it—Tibbitude. We describe them as dog-cat-monkey because they have the loyalty of the dog, the independence of the cat and the cleverness and mischievousness of the monkey. Because of their ultra independent natures, they will escape and go walkabout given half a chance. They are problem-solvers. They will climb or dig or or jump or squeeze through, whatever it takes, to go on an adventure. Despite their size and “frou-frou” appearance, they are athletic and super fast. They can NEVER be off-lead in a non-secured area. We always require secure fenced yards and warn fosters and adopters to keep them on lead.

Aloofness Even under the best of circumstances, Tibbies often act “aloof” with strangers. They often turn away their head from someone who approaches them and avoid eye contact. People who don't know that may think that they aren't friendly. But, when they've known someone for a few hours, all but the most traumatized or abused open up. They become sweet and utterly adorable and will gaze lovingly into their person's eyes.

Sensitivity Tibbies are very sensitive and perceptive. If they were human, we would call them soft-hearted or compassionate. It makes them great therapy dogs. But it also means that they are often absolutely terrified in shelters – so much so that it may cause a shelters to decide a Tibbie is unadoptable. In a stable, kind home, the terrified Tibbie's true temperament will shine through. We emphasize that only training methods based on positive reinforcement should be used with a Tibbie. Dominance-based or harsh training methods will utterly destroy a Tibbie's trust.

Climbing and Dexterity All Tibbies are built and hard-wired to climb. They naturally gravitate to the highest place available, whether it's the back of the sofa or atop the dining room table. They are fearless. Their hare-foot, with its long toes, gives them dexterity and they are often seen to use their paws like hands to grip and maneuver objects.

Communicative In Tibet, Tibbies were bred to be watchdogs. They use a variety of sounds to communicate and are very vocal. We call it Tibbie Talk. A unique Tibbie sound is the eerie howl we call The Scream. They are not yappy but they will bark to alert to intruders. They will need positive reinforcement training to learn when to “turn off” the bark.

Enchantment People who get to know a Tibbie are smitten—forever. Even big guys who only like big dogs. Seriously. We call it Tibbie Enchantment.

For More Information...

- See these websites:
<https://tstrust.org/>
<https://www.tscaws.com/>
<https://www.akc.org/dog-breeds/tibetan-spaniel/>
- Contact TSCA Rescue (Susan Waller Miccio, national coordinator) at info@tstrust.org or 302-270-2881.