

Dalmatian Breed Characteristics

by Julia Soukup, JLS Dalmatians -

Dalmatians are very happy and enthusiastic dogs. They love being the clown and the center of attention at all times. They are very loyal and a good family dog, but generally can be too rowdy for very small children (children under five). However, it is not fair to stereotype all Dalmatians into this category. I had one, Starlet, who was such a little lady and would be gentle enough for a baby!

Dalmatians are NOT outside dogs. They desire to be a family dog (inside the house) and will be very unhappy and will most likely protest at being left outside. Protesting can be vocal or through destructive behavior i.e. digging holes, chewing on things, etc.

Dalmatians are very active dogs and require exercise everyday. They are great jogging or biking partners. No, they are not all "hyper" or "high-strung". They generally have a high energy level and may get excited easily. However, with proper exercise and attention they are very happy being couch potatoes! Especially if you break out the popcorn. One of our favorite activities is popping corn for the dogs. We play catch and laugh at them. It is very entertaining and they LOVE it!

Dalmatians are a natural watch dog. They are loyal to family and friends and may be aloof to strangers. They may not automatically love everyone the first time they meet them. They are territorial and may protect their space if provoked.

Dalmatians are easy to groom and clean. They generally are self-cleaning. If you have more than one they will more than likely groom each other as often as you will let them. They do SHED all year long and it is advised that you switch to a tweed décor and clothing, if possible.

Dalmatians are very intelligent and learn quickly. Do not believe those dog intelligence ratings that you have seen in the past. Most Dalmatians are very smart and get bored quickly. They can learn a command in less than fifteen minutes, however, they are also stubborn, and may CHOOSE not to obey. Afterall, you are now owned by a Dalmatian, you do not own them!

Dalmatians respond well to positive training methods (food and praise). They do not respond as well to correction only type of training. It is best to use a combination of positive training with corrections as necessary. Dalmatians are smart and will train YOU to do what they want if you are not careful. They respond well to lots of love with an alpha dog position by you. I always say if they know you LOVE them they will do anything for you.

Dalmatians love to be with you no matter what you are doing! They can be demanding and want you to please them, so if you want a pet that really doesn't want you around much, then get a cat!

If you respect an intelligent, independent, demanding, loving, funny, clown-like dog then you will love a Dalmatian!

Is a Dalmatian the right breed of dog for you?

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