

Decisions: Male or Female???

<http://www.passionstandardpoodles.com/male-female.php>

Many people believe that female dogs make better pets...female preference seems to be ingrained in these people. Most calls for pet dogs have people wanting a 'sweet girl'. They don't think females display alpha behaviors like 'marking' and/or 'humping'. They believe that they are more docile and attentive and do not participate in fighting over dominance.

Well folks, this is not true.

In the dog pack makeup, females usually rule the roost, determine pecking order, and who compete to maintain and/or alter that order. The females are, as a result, more independent, stubborn, and territorial than their male counterparts. The females are much more intent upon exercising their dominance by participating in alpha behaviors such as 'humping'. There IS a reason people utilize the technical dog term of 'bitch' in a negative way-and it refers directly to the behaviors exhibited by the females of the dog world.

Most fights will usually break out between 2 females. Males, on the other hand, are usually more affectionate, exuberant, attentive, and more demanding of attention. They are very attached to their people. They also tend to be more steadfast, reliable, and less moody. They are more outgoing, more accepting of other pets, and take quicker to children. Most boys are easily motivated by food (how true!!) and praise, and so eager to please that training is easy. However, males can be more easily distracted during training, as males like to play so often. And no matter what age, he is more likely to act silly and more puppy-like, always wanting to play games. Boys are fun loving until the day they die. Females tend to be more reserved or dignified as they age. Witness the human equivalent of the twinkling eyed Grandpa still playing catch at age 70, while Grandma quietly observes from the porch.

Boys do get bigger than girls, but only by an average of 1-2 inches and a few pounds.

Neutered males rarely exhibit secondary sexual behavior such as 'humping', or 'marking' and lifting of legs. Once the testosterone levels recede after neutering, most of these behaviors (if they ever existed) will disappear. Boys who were neutered early (by 5 months of age) usually don't ever raise their leg to urinate. And while the female will usually come to you for attention, when she's had enough, she will move away. While boys are always, waiting for your attention and near at hand. Females are usually less distracted during training, as she is more eager to get it over with, and get back to her comfy spot on the couch. The female is less likely to wage a dominance battle with YOU, but she can be cunning and resourceful in getting her own way. She is much more prone to mood swings. One day she may be sweet and affectionate-the next day reserved and withdrawn or even grumpy. The female also has periods of being 'in heat' unless she is spayed.

Seasonal heats can be a month long nightmare not just for the female, but you and every male dog in the neighborhood. Did we mention that the seasonal heats happen **TWICE** a year?

If you are not breeding, you'd be best off to have her spayed since during this time she can leave a bloody discharge on carpets, couches, or anywhere she goes. She will be particularly moody and emotional during this time. A walk outside during this period can become hazardous if male dogs are in the vicinity, and she will leave a 'scent' for wandering intact males to follow right to your yard, where they will hang out, and 'wait' for days.

Research has also proven that a female NOT bred during a heat cycle stays in a flux of estrogen level which may give us the reason as to why females are more moody than males.

Males generally cost 1/2 the price to have neutered as a female does to be spayed.

SOOOOOO ...before you decide on that age old dilemma of male or female, there are many things to think about.

On a personal note? I have had both males and female each at different times being the only pet, and loved them the same. Each was everything I wanted in a pet. I have had both sexes with other dogs and still have no preference for one over the other. They are both wonderful regardless of any connotation put on sex.

If you have your mind set on one sex only just remember probably most of what you have heard were isolated situations and either sex can be and is a wonderful pet to have. Don't shut out the opposite sex because of preconceived notions? you might be missing the most wonderful pet you would have ever had.

Male vs. Female:

<http://pdrawls.tripod.com/id21.html>

Many breeds show distinct differences between the sexes. In some breeds one or the other may be more prone to aggression, protectiveness. They may differ in affection levels and in intelligence or skills.

Having both male and female I can contest to what I see within my own Tzu. I have found very little difference between male and female behaviors. This is a non-aggressive breed and both are quite loving and cuddly. House training is going well for both with no noted differences.

I have noticed that Piper, our female, is much more adventurous and inquisitive than Lakota, our male. This could be partially due to the breed, or it could simply be just a

personality difference between them. Lakota has always been quite laid back. Both are very accepting of strangers and new situations.

Miscellaneous:

The Shih Tzu Race 500 is a daily routine in my house, and it is apparently a trait of all Shih Tzu. I call it the Off to the Races in comical reference to the car races. Daily, during playtime, they will run and run all round the house several times until they decide it's done. It's the funniest thing to watch and the kitties have learned to stay out of the way! Despite how much outside activity they get during the day you can be assured they will still run the race in the house at some point.

Shih Tzu are very good with other animals and dogs. They love being around others whether human or animal. Mine love the cats, although the cats merely tolerate them. If you get a rescue dog you'll need to let them know if you have other animals. Some rescues may have had hard lives with other animals and may not be suitable for multiple animal homes.

In closing I just want to say that for me, choosing the Shih Tzu breed was the best decision I have ever made. I have been blessed with various breeds throughout my life and loved every one, but somehow the Shih Tzu have stolen my heart. I would never own (or be owned) by any other breed again. I wish you the greatest success if you choose a Tzu!