

Handling Your Livestock Guardian Dog

We need to do a lot of work here in Australia (and indeed other parts of the world) to dispel the myth that you shouldn't handle your Livestock Guardian Dog or pup. Traditionally shepherds would handle and work with their dogs and often walk them with their livestock through the villages.

A responsible owner must be able to administer first aid to an injured dog or put the dog into your car and get it to a vet if need be. Applying flea treatments and giving worming treatments is also essential as they are exposed to parasites. In many parts of Australia you need to check them over for paralysis ticks and in other areas you need to be able to remove other types of ticks from the eyelids, noses and other areas of the body. You should be able to walk them on a leash and handle their paws and legs as they can sustain injuries or foreign objects are caught in their paws like grass seeds, prickles and small stones. I have had to bandage a dog's leg after a tiger snake bite (to buy them time) whilst rushing her to the vet.

I spend lots of time with my dogs in the paddocks walking with them, sitting with them, grooming them, giving them treats and pats. We have a great relationship and I can see they want to please me. If i see my dogs chase off an eagle (which only happened a few days ago) i went out to praise them and they looked very pleased with themselves!

Be very cautious if a breeder has not handled pups and if a believer of this myth as it will likely create problems for you and your dog.

Dogs that have not been handled properly can often find their way to pounds, shelters, rescue groups or worse are shot or are put to sleep as they are deemed unfit, skittish, fear aggressive or are difficult.

Anyhow I thought it was worth posting this so we can educate others to have well rounded, happy dogs and owners.

Be aware that temperament and breeding can also come into how easily a dog is handled and relates to you but that is a whole different post!

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