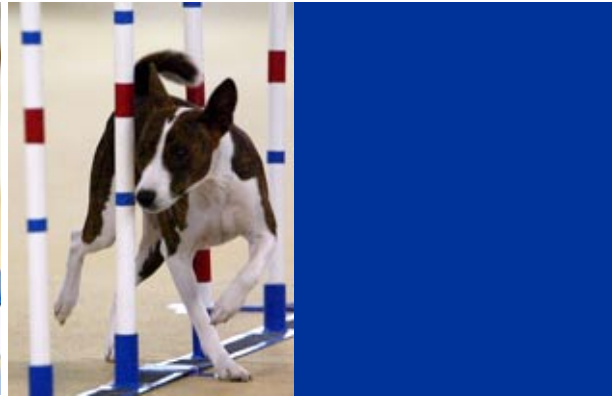




## CHOOSING A TRAINER FOR YOUR BASENJI

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- 2 | HOW DO I FIND A TRAINER?**
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**1 | WHY SHOULD I ENROLL MY BASENJI IN A TRAINING CLASS? (I don't plan to compete in obedience, agility, or conformation.)**

A training class will help you develop the skills you need to communicate with your dog. It will provide the ground work for an easier and deeper relationship with your dog. Do not leave your dog at a training facility to be trained for you. The goal is to train you, as well as your dog.

The need to learn a shared language is especially important with Basenjis. The breed's independent nature often frustrates owners who haven't taken the time to acknowledge their innate drive for self-preservation. Basenjis need to understand, and willingly comply, before they will follow direction.

If you are interested in formal Obedience, Agility, or Rally-O you'll want to find a trainer who is experienced in the same.

Keep in mind that Basenjis aren't Golden Retrievers and are unlikely to become top obedience competitors. However, with patience and good humor on the part of the owner/trainer, Basenjis can do well in obedience and agility.

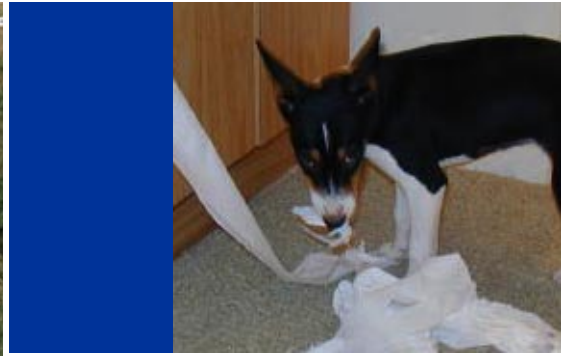
**2 | HOW DO I FIND A TRAINER?**

One of the best sources is the breeder you are getting your dog from. If they personally don't know of a good training facility, or you live out of the area, they may have contacts that can help you. If not, contact your local Basenji club and the BCOA. Your veterinarian and the local human society may also be good resources.

Schedule some time to attend obedience and agility trials in your area. Observe the dogs who appear to be happy in the ring and ask the handlers about trainers in the area.

**BASENJIS—EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED**





**BASENJIS CHOOSE WHEN TO OBEY**

### **3 | WHAT TRAINING TECHNIQUES WORK BEST WITH BASENJIS?**

Basenjis have a reputation for being difficult to train. The reality is that they learn quickly—they simply consider the pros and cons of responding. Your job is to offer a compelling reason why they should do what you want them to do.

Basenjis learn best when positive training techniques are used. Trainers who use positive methods will show you how to prompt, or lure, your dog into performing the desired behavior and reward them.

### **4 | WHAT SHOULD I ASK WHEN I INTERVIEW A TRAINER?**

Ask for references from clients who have taken their courses—even if the trainer comes highly recommended by your breeder, vet, or best friend.

Ask about the trainer's background, years of experience and areas of expertise. You'll want to find a knowledgeable trainer who has experience in your area of interest.

Ask if they are affiliated with any breed clubs or training organizations. Being a member of an organization doesn't necessarily confer a seal of approval, but you might want to ask why a trainer is unaffiliated.

Ask about their continuing education. A good trainer loves dogs and cares deeply about them—a committed trainer will continue to educate themselves about dog behavior and training techniques through attending seminars, conferences, and workshops.

Ask them to tell you how they train and what breeds they have trained. Let them know you have a Basenji and note their response. Trainers who have worked primarily with Labs, Border Collies, and Poodles may not be prepared for a Basenji.

If you have a puppy, ask if they have classes geared towards puppies.

Ask what the course will cover.

Check to see what the vaccine requirements are for dogs and for puppies in particular. Talk with your vet and breeder if some requirements seem excessive or lax.

Ask if you can audit a class. You should be able to watch any of their classes without notice. If it is not allowed or encouraged, ask why.

**5 | WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR WHEN AUDITING A CLASS?**

Watch to see how the trainer interacts with the students and the dogs.

Do they appear to enjoy both the people and the dogs?

Are people and dogs having fun?

Does the trainer use humane techniques on dog and owner alike?

Will you be comfortable asking questions if you decide to train with them?

Are the instructions clear?

Is adequate time given for all class members to understand the instructions?

If it is a large class are there enough instructors to give individual help when needed?

Ask class members what they think of the class and the instructor.

**6 | SHOULD I ENROLL MY BASENJI IN PUPPY KINDERGARTEN?**

In short, yes! Puppy Kindergarten is typically a series of low pressure classes, geared to their age group. You and your pup will learn some basic communication skills. The trainer should be able and willing to address basic questions about mouthing, house training, and redirecting exuberant puppy behavior as well as walking on a loose lead, coming when called and sitting politely.

**7 | I'VE ENROLLED IN A CLASS AND I'M NOT SURE ABOUT SOME OF THE TECHNIQUES.**

If at anytime, you are uncomfortable with what you are being asked to do with your dog, ask for an explanation. If you are still uncomfortable, simply say you are not going to do it. Unless you have complete confidence in your trainer and their relationship with your dog, do not allow them to handle your dog for you. As a last resort you can walk out. You should not be required to do anything you are not comfortable with.

**8 | POINTS TO REMEMBER**

Training your dog is a means to developing a shared language—your own way of connecting with your dog.

The trainer is there to train you to communicate with your dog. If you don't click with the trainer, neither you or your dog will learn a thing.

Be sure the trainer gives clear explanations and ample time to practice. You can read all the books you want, but only a living breathing coach can give real-time insights.

Trust your instincts. You are responsible for the safety and well being of your dog.

Have fun! And make sure your dog does too!



**BASENJIS BLOOM WITH LOVE & PATIENCE**