**Is a Shar Pei the Dog for Me?**

**Stubborn and Determined** – If you expect to be able to train your Shar Pei in a few minutes, you are very mistaken.  Shar Pei needs to be treated firmly but fairly in all things, and any training must be on a rewards-based system.  If you are looking for a dog who will hang on your every word a Shar Pei is not for you.

**I Will Protect You—**Shar Pei can be naturally protective and frequently grumbles at other people and dogs if they feel any threat.  While this is reassuring, it can also cause problems, so training classes and socialisation are necessary.

**Shedding and Mess**—Shar Pei generally moult twice a year. Although some Shar Pei hate water, others love to swim and play in muddy puddles. Most Shar-Pei are also very good at destroying stuffed toys, which might be an issue if you suffer from allergies.

**Companionship** – They like to be with you.  Shar Pei loves human company; they don’t like to be left and will even follow you around from room to room just to be close. They do best where there is someone at home most of the time.  Shar Pei suffers particularly badly in a kennel situation, where they will become stressed and depressed.

**Not Everyone’s Best Friend** – Shar Pei don’t greet everyone they meet as their new best friend; they are reserved and aloof and will only make friends on their terms and in their own time. Even a well-trained Shar Pei may greet strangers with a bit of a grumble, and they generally reserve their enthusiasm for family and special people.

**Rules and Boundaries** – If you can’t enforce the rules of your household (in a firm but fair way), and enforce them consistently, you will find that the ruler of your house has four legs and a wet nose. Shar Pei are very smart, and if you aren’t in charge, they will be.  They must be taught their position in the family, particularly with regard to children

**Grumbles and Growls** – Shar Pei can be very vocal, although they will grumble as much as they growl or bark.  This will often intimidate people who are not familiar with the breed.  You will need a strategy when introducing your Shar Pei to new people and new situations.

**Exercise** – A Shar Pei does require daily exercise

Many of the Shar Pei we rehome have not received training, and many will not be used to a home environment. Training a fully grown Shar Pei who has missed out on the basics as a puppy isn’t easy, but with patience and commitment, it can be done

We want homes for our dogs, but we want the right homes. Too many people adopt a Shar Pei and then soon after, they are back on the phone asking us to take him/her back. **Why?** Because they still have the problems they had when they were adopted. **Why?** Because the new owner expected too much of their dog, they weren’t prepared to be patient and allow the dog to adjust to a new life, and they hadn’t worked on training and socialisation.

All rescue dogs come with baggage; neither we nor you can say what that will be.  You must give your dog time to settle into their new home and lifestyle.  You may experience any of the following issues, sometimes all of them:  disobedience, stomach upsets or fevering episodes, chewing, lack of toilet training, food aggression, fear aggression, neck shyness, fear of noises or situations, grumbles resulting from insecurity, etc.

This article is not meant to put you off fostering or adopting. Shar Pei can make loving and adorable family pets if you put the work in. Remember, our volunteers are also here to provide advice and support.