

Other Ideas About Herding

Ideas

MY one suggestion that would be a pre-cursor to a commitment to herding, and indeed it is a commitment..would be that any newbie go to the site (and without dog even) and spend an afternoon or morning watching the teaching, the nuances, site structure, energy vibes and just quietly watch or ask questions. Accepting a name off a list is a bare start on the journey. MY idea of a fit psychologically and physically for MY dog may well not be a fit for the next person..and believe me, finding that fit is very important. I would hope that newbies would want to learn right along side their dog unless physically one is just plain not able. A few instructors almost prefer to take on the dog but not the person, and of course an individual needs to make that decision for themselves what is right for them AND..their dog. My idea of a good coach/teacher is one who takes on "the dog" with the "breed" being of less importance. It is a fact that our dogs are Beardies...but they are dogs first.and being a Beardie is not an excuse.

Beardie Handler

Lott, Mary

Consider offering a clinic at the National for those interested in learning more about herding. Oelfke, Sandy

The more frequently you can train, the more rapid the progress. It's your task to learn how stock react to your dog and you. Starting out it is difficult to keep track of everything happening so fast; an experienced trainer will see all and be able to explain it afterwards. Avoid special training clinics until you have a solid foundation established to avoid confusion among training methods. Understand that this is a physically demanding outdoor sport with the possibility of contact with stock and/or the ground - you will be walking a lot of miles so a modicum of physical conditioning is useful. Finally, all herding dogs need to develop the same skills for whatever level of work or trialing is planned - become motionless (stop/stand/lie down) immediately, go right/left/or away from stock, speed up or slow down, controlling stock without upset - regardless of breed.

Sell, Elsa

Practice at many locations as you can. Dogs do not generalize without opportunity. If you can, volunteer to just go to your trainer/location and help with chores while the dog does no work but is "with you". If the dog expects to work every time they see sheep, some poor habits may develop. At some clinics and locations, trainers employ exercises intended to build confidence and enthusiasm for the work of herding through prey drive. Listen to your inner voice: if your dog does not need more enthusiasm, be sure to decline to participate.

Vaughn, Joanne

Ideas

Have a reliable stay BEFORE starting serious livestock training. Make sure your dog is comfortable working in both directions. If your dog favors one direction over the other, work the less preferred direction about 5X more than you work the more preferred direction. When teaching a new skill, use a smaller space with heavier stock and graduate to larger spaces before you lighten the stock being used. Try working ducks as well as sheep. Sometimes with an overly enthusiastic Beardie, it is possible to make progress training on ducks where the dog would be overstimulated working sheep. Try to take your dog out to as many training venues as possible. Try to set up training situations that are more difficult than you expect to see when you are trailing so you can be sure you are really ready before competition. If a run goes really wrong, don't be afraid to call it. Sometimes leaving the field on leash with the job undone is the best correction you can give your dog.

Beardie Handler

Williamson, Joanne