

the tub. I use the cue word “in” as I pivot to the left. Then I teach pivots to the right with her in normal heel position, using the cue word “get close” as I pivot to the right. These pivots prepare her for good right turns and pivots. When I finally do incorporate right turns and pivots into heeling, I walk at a pace that allows her to keep up with me and stay in close.

I don’t ask for sits until I am happy with heeling without sits. When asking for sits, I lure her into a sit while encouraging speed. Again, I start with her on my right side and walk backwards. I find that my pup has more drive following me from this position, rather than from my left side.

Keep heeling fun, don’t admonish your dog, and help them be confident heelers! —L.C.

Thank you, Leanne!

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## Pulik Puli Smarts

The Puli is considered by many to be a smart breed of dog. But what does “smart” really mean? Stanley Coren’s book *The Intelligence of Dogs* defines three aspects of dog intelligence: instinctive intelligence, adaptive intelligence, and working and obedience intelligence. *Instinctive intelligence* refers to a dog’s ability to perform the tasks it was bred for, so in this case, herding. *Adaptive intelligence* refers to a dog’s ability to solve problems on its own. *Working and obedience intelligence* refers to a dog’s ability to learn from humans.

Coren reported that the Puli was ranked as an above-average working dog—obeying commands the first time, 70 percent of the time or better, and understanding new commands after just 15–25 repetitions.

In 1935, the U.S. Department of

Agriculture imported four Pulik to Beltsville, Maryland, as part of a project to study the intelligence and attitudes of dogs used in sheepherding, and specifically, to study how the Puli would be able to improve the abilities of sheepdogs in the United States. The dogs in this experiment consisted of Pulik and crosses with Pulik–German Shepherd, Pulik–Border Collie, Pulik–Chow Chow, and Turkish sheepdogs. It should be noted that this experiment was conducted almost exclusively on Pulik and Pulik crosses, so it was not necessarily a competitive study of the Puli with other breeds.

In a September 1957 letter, W.M. Dawson wrote that researchers “found some of the Puli highly intelligent and cooperative with the trainer, but on the average no more so than the average of our other dogs.”

A few Puli articles report that where other herding breeds scored in the range of 12 to 14 on the tests given by researchers there, Pulik scored, on the average, between 75 and 85. However, I have not been able to substantiate that statement in my review of information.

One of the few published scientific results from the Beltsville experiment was where a dog was faced with the problem of finding which one of four doors was unlocked. The scores on avoiding the repetition of choosing the incorrect door ranged from 39 to 80 percent, with an average of almost 57 percent. The Pulik averaged from 52 to 57 percent. The Puli–German Shepherd cross averages ranged from about 61 to 64 percent, significantly higher than any of the others. Results were considered inconclusive due to a small sample size (and then unfortunately, the onset of World War II resulted in the shut-down of this experimental program).

However, are these really the only ways to consider Puli intelligence? In studies of humans, discussions of intelligence stretch to social intelligence (the ability to identify and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others). Anyone who has been owned by a Puli can tell you that the Puli is one of the most demanding and manipulative breeds, with “a capacity for causing mischief that is truly awesome.” In a 1938 interview, W.M. Dawson noted that one Puli “went through all the intelligence tests right away, then got bored with such stuff and just naturally quit. She is forever starting a rumpus among the other dogs and then watching the fracas with amusement.”

Anyone who has competed in obedience or agility can tell you that even the most seemingly best-trained Puli will “give you the paw” and come up with some unexpected way to humiliate their human(s)—and do it with quite a big smile on their face and glint in their eyes. And let’s not even discuss how much a Puli hates repetition in training.

To conclude, “intelligence” is hard to define, whether in dogs, other animals, or humans. The ability to learn quickly might be taken as a sign of intelligence, but such evidence must be interpreted with care, because learning speed may be affected by such things as the effectiveness of the rewards used in training; the motivation or activity level of the dog; and even the character and attitude of the trainer. To me, a Puli who actively works to make you smile every single day is very intelligent.

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