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# Cane Corsos: What's Good About 'Em, What's Bad About 'Em

Cane Corso temperament, personality, training, behavior, pros and cons, advice, and information, by [Michele Welton](#), Dog Trainer, Behavioral Consultant, Author of 15 [Dog Books](#)

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When it comes to athleticism, agility, speed, energy level, and sense of adventure, the Cane Corso (*CAH-nay COR-so*) easily outdoes the other mastiff breeds.

This robust dog needs his share of exercise, but above all he requires personal interaction and lots of companionship. He lives for his family and may become destructive if left alone too much.

Cane Corso puppies should be friendly and trusting with strangers. With proper socialization, they become more aloof and discerning as they mature.

As with all mastiffs, socialization is an absolute requirement to promote the correct temperament, which should be protective in a calm and discriminating way. Unfortunately, an awful lot of people are breeding or raising these dogs in irresponsible ways and the result is an awful lot of Cane Corsos with unstable or aggressive temperaments that can be dangerous to innocent people.

Though the Cane Corso was not used for dog-fighting, dog aggression (often very serious) can still be a problem. He should be thoroughly socialized with other dogs from an early age. I wouldn't keep a Cane Corso with another large dog of the same sex.

The Cane Corso is more attentive to his owner and more responsive to training than other mastiffs. Though quite dominant and strong-willed, he will respect an owner who is confident and consistent.

Cane Corsos have tighter skin than other mastiffs and drool less. Some love to dig holes, and most enjoy splashing in water, whether it be a pond or a mudhole, the lawn sprinkler or their water bowl. These are not

dainty dogs for fastidious housekeepers!

If you want a dog who...

- Is massive and powerful
- Has a short easy-care coat
- Is calm and quiet indoors *as an adult*
- Makes an imposing watchdog
- Is serious and self-assured with strangers, yet generally mild-mannered unless aroused
- Compared to other mastiffs, is more energetic, more athletic, and more responsive to training

A Cane Corso may be right for you.

If you don't want to deal with...

- A huge dog who takes up a lot of space in your house and car
- A heavy dog who wants to sit on your feet and lean his weight against your leg
- Rowdiness and exuberant jumping when young
- Destructiveness when bored or left alone too much
- Potential aggression toward people when not acquired from a responsible source or when not raised and trained properly
- Potential aggression toward other animals
- Strong-willed mind of his own, requiring a confident owner who can take charge
- Snorting, snuffling, wheezing, grunting, loud snoring
- Slobbering and drooling (individuals with heavy jowls)
- Gassiness (flatulence)
- Legal liabilities (public perception, future breed bans, insurance problems, increased chance of lawsuits)

A Cane Corso may not be right for you.

Keep in mind that the inheritance of **temperament** is less predictable than the inheritance of **physical** traits such as size or shedding. Temperament and behavior are also shaped by raising and training.

- You can avoid some negative traits by choosing an ADULT dog from an [animal shelter](#) or [rescue group](#). With an adult dog, you can easily see what you're getting, and plenty of adult Cane Corsos have already proven themselves not to have negative characteristics.
- If you want a puppy, you can avoid some negative traits by choosing the [right breeder](#) and the [right puppy](#). Unfortunately, you usually can't tell whether a puppy has inherited temperament or health problems until he grows up.
- Finally, you can avoid some negative traits by [training your Cane Corso](#) to respect you and by following the 11-step care program in my book, [11 Things You Must Do Right To Keep Your Dog Healthy and Happy](#).

More traits and characteristics of the Cane Corso (Italian Mastiff)

If I was considering a Cane Corso, I would be most concerned about...

1. **Providing the proper balance of exercise.** Young Cane Corsos need enough exercise to keep them lean and healthy, but not so much that their soft growing bones, joints, and ligaments become over-stressed and damaged. Adult Cane Corsos need more exercise to keep them in shape, but not in hot or humid weather for fear of overheating. The proper amount of exercise can be difficult to regulate in giant breeds.

Since you need to minimize their exercise, young Cane Corsos can be very rambunctious. They will romp with uncoordinated gawkiness all over your house. You need to substitute extra quantities of companionship and supervision during this trying time. Otherwise your young mastiff will become bored and destructive and his powerful jaws can literally destroy your living room.

2. **Providing enough socialization.** Most Cane Corsos have protective instincts toward strangers. They need extensive exposure to friendly people so they learn to recognize the normal behaviors of "good guys." Then they can recognize the difference when someone acts abnormally. Without careful socialization, they may be suspicious of everyone. Some Cane Corsos go in the opposite direction -- without enough socialization, they become fearful of strangers, which could possibly lead to **defensive** biting.
3. **Potential animal aggression.** Many Cane Corsos will not tolerate another dog of the same sex, and some won't tolerate the opposite sex either. Some Cane Corsos have strong instincts to chase and seize cats and other fleeing creatures. If anything goes wrong in the breeding, socializing, training, handling, or management of this breed, it is capable of seriously injuring or killing other animals.

4. **The strong temperament.** Though much more trainable than other mastiff breeds, Cane Corsos have an independent mind of their own and are not pushovers to raise and train. Many Cane Corsos are dominant (they want to be the boss) and will make you prove that you can make them do things. You must show them, through absolute consistency, that you mean what you say.

To teach your Cane Corso to listen to you, "Respect Training" is mandatory. My [Cane Corso Training](#) article discusses the program you need.

5. **Cane Corso sounds.** Cane Corsos snort, grunt, and snore loudly. The sounds are endearing to some people; nerve-wracking to others.

6. **Potential drooling.** Cane Corsos with heavy jowls drool and slobber. Those with "tighter" lips do not.



Read my  
★★★★★  
5-star  
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7. **Gassiness (flatulence).** All short-faced breeds gulp air when they eat, and that air has to go somewhere, after all. However, commercial diets make flatulence worse by including fibrous or hard-to-digest ingredients. Cane Corsos who are fed a [homemade diet of real meat and vegetables](#) have much less trouble with gassiness.

8. **Potential health problems.** The lifespan of the mastiff breeds is short. An alarming number are crippled by bone and joint diseases and/or succumb to heart diseases, bloat, or cancer in middle age. Read more about [Cane Corso Health](#).

9. **Potential legal liabilities.** Cane Corsos may be targeted for "banning" in certain areas, or refusal of homeowner insurance policies. Your friends and neighbors may be uncomfortable around this breed. In this day and age, the legal liabilities of owning any breed that looks intimidating and has a history as a guard dog should be seriously considered. People are quicker to sue if such a dog does anything even remotely questionable.

Frankly, most Cane Corsos are "too much dog" for the average household. Very few people really have the ability to manage this breed.

**About the author:** Michele Welton has over 40 years of experience as a Dog Trainer, Dog Breed Consultant, and founder of three Dog Training Centers. An expert researcher and author of 15 books about dogs, she loves helping people choose, train, and care for their dogs.

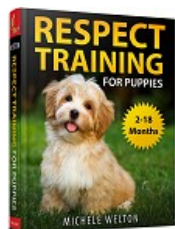


To help you train and care for your dog



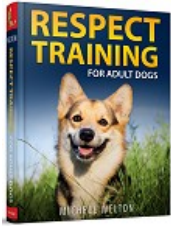
[Dog training videos.](#) Sometimes it's easier to train your puppy (or adult dog) when you can see the correct training techniques in action.

The problem is that most dog training videos on the internet are worthless, because they use the wrong training method. I recommend these [dog training videos](#) that are based on respect and leadership.

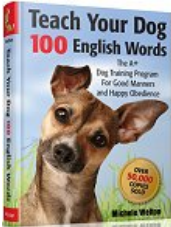


[Respect Training For Puppies: 30 seconds to a calm, polite, well-behaved puppy.](#) For puppies 2 to 18 months old. Your puppy will learn the 21 skills that all family dogs need to know.

If your dog is **over** 18 months, you'll want [Respect Training For Adult Dogs: 30 seconds to a calm, polite, well-behaved dog](#). Again your dog will learn the 21 skills that all family dogs need to know.



[Teach Your Dog 100 English Words](#) is a unique Vocabulary and Respect Training Program that will teach your adult dog to listen to you and do what you say.



[11 Things You Must Do Right To Keep Your Dog Healthy and Happy](#) helps your dog live a longer, healthier life.



[Dog Quest: Find The Dog Of Your Dreams](#) will help you find a good-tempered, healthy family companion.



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