



All Dawgs

*ALL Dogs' Favorite Spot
Play • Learn • Stay*

30 Railroad Ave • Albany, NY 12205
info@alldawgs.com • www.alldawgs.com
(518)831-9192 • Fax (518)831-9091

Traits for Service Dog Work

When selecting a puppy for service dog work, the following traits can help (or hinder) the dog's success in that role:

Biddability

Biddability is the dog's desire to work with, following directions from and seek to obey commands from humans. Biddable dogs are very interested in doing whatever it is the human wants to do, whether it is training, playing or taking a nap! Less biddable, more independent dogs do not try to understand what the human wants. They tend to ask the question why – “why do I have to do this down? Why do I have to do it this way?” Biddability is a relatively stable trait, which means training and/or socialization will not substantially change this trait.

Recommendation: Medium to High Biddability

Courage

Courage is the dog's mental strength to preserve when afraid. Service dogs go into new places all the time so courage is a must! A service dog cannot help you if they cannot help themselves! This is a relatively stable trait.

Recommendation: Medium to High Courage

Dog Focus

Dog focus is the dog's need to focus on and/or interact with other dogs. This is a relatively tweakable trait.

Recommendation: Low to Medium Dog Focus

Energy Level

Energy is one of the most stable traits a dog possesses. A dog will maintain the energy they have as a puppy well into their senior years. You want the dog to have enough energy to complete his or her tasks but not so much they cannot be quiet during the long times a service dog must wait for instructions. This is a stable trait.

Recommendation: Medium Energy

Environmental Focus

Environmental Focus is the dog's need to concentrate on and focus their energy on their environment – from electrical outlets to grass. The more the dog focuses on these things, the less the dog will have to focus on the handler's needs. This is a relatively stable trait.

Recommendation: Low Environmental Focus

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the dog's reaction to a negative behavior or emotion that is unwarranted or unfair to the puppy, even if it is not directed towards the dog. If you are struggling with a new computer software package and shout your frustration, a forgiving dog will assume it is his or her fault. An unforgiving dog will not assume they made a mistake. This is a relatively stable trait.

Recommendation: More unforgiving than forgiving

Object Focus

Object focus is the dog's need to focus on and/or interact with objects in his or her area. This is a relatively tweakable trait.

Recommendation: Low to Medium Object Focus

Resilience

Resilience is the dog's ability to cope to change and/or stress. Service dogs are asked to deal with a myriad of situations. The dog needs to be able to adapt and recover quickly to be able to perform his or her tasks. Resilience is a tweakable trait during the puppy's socialization period.

Recommendation: Medium to High Resilience

Retrieve Desire

Retrieve desire is the dog's need and intensity to chase, grab, hold and return objects. Any dog can learn to retrieve, but dogs with higher Retrieve Desire have an easier time learning to pick up items for their handler. This is a relatively tweakable trait.

Recommendation: Medium to High Retrieve Desire

Self-Confidence

Self-Confidence is how much trust the dog has in himself instead of looking for confidence from another person, dog or from the situation. The more self-confident the dog is, the better for service dog work. This is a relatively stable trait.

Recommendation: Medium to High Self--Confidence

Sight Sensitivity

Sight sensitivity is the dog's fear response to an unusual visual object. All dogs are expected to startle but it should not be extreme fear or an aggressive reaction. Sight Sensitivity is a tweakable trait.

Recommendation: Low Sight Sensitivity

Sound Sensitivity

Sound sensitivity is the dog's fear response to a usual noise. All dogs are expected to startle but it should not be extreme fear or an aggressive reaction. Sound sensitivity is a tweakable trait.

Recommendation: Low Sound Sensitivity