

A Brief Introduction to the Korean Jindo Dog



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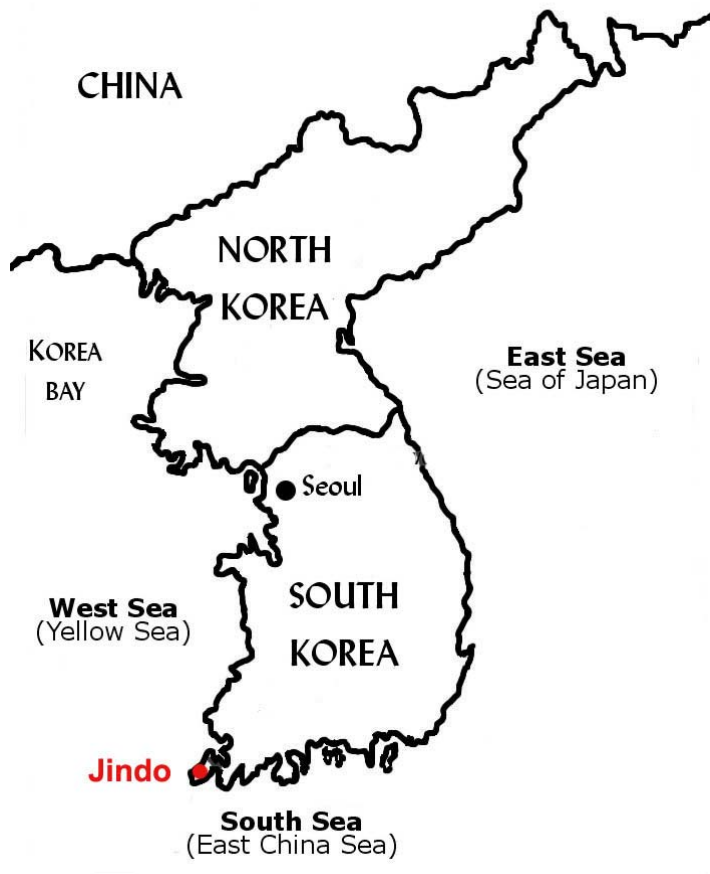
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Summary by Ann Kim

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I. The Origins of the Korean Jindo Dog

The Korean Jindo dog is an old breed that originates from an island called Jindo, which is located off the southwest coast of South Korea. They are utilized as hunting dogs and home guard dogs.



There are no written records about how the first dogs arrived on the island of Jindo. There are theories revolving around Mongolian conquest, Chinese shipwrecks, and mixings with wild canines, but the most widely held theory is that the Jindo dog originated from the dogs already indigenous to the Korean peninsula thousands of years ago.

Contrary to some rumors, the Jindo is not a wild animal. The Jindo dog lived in companionship with man on Jindo island and they are categorized as a member of *canis familiaris*. The Jindo dog does, however, possess many primitive traits that enable it to cope in a wild environment. The breed was allowed to develop under natural selection rather than human selection due to the difficult living conditions on the island. Dogs hunted small game on their own to supplement the meager food that their owners could provide them.

Because Jindo island was isolated by its natural barriers, the Jindo dog developed insulated from the influence of other dog types for hundreds of years and are considered a purebred breed for that reason.

II. The Current Status of the Jindo

In Korea, the Jindo dog is designated as Republic of Korea Preservation of Cultural Assets Act No. 53 (or simply called Korea Natural Treasure #53). Dogs born on the island fall under the jurisdiction of Jindo County. The county holds bi-yearly evaluations of young dogs, is responsible for the protection of the dogs, and hosts the annual Jindo Island dog show. A research institute was created in 1999 for the study of the Jindo dog.

There is a large population of Jindo dogs that live outside of the island though. The mainland of Korea has a significant population, perhaps half of all Jindos in South Korea, and there are many Jindo dog organizations that strive to preserve the purity of the breed and promote the propagation of excellent dogs.

In the United States, the Jindo dog can usually be found in large Korean immigrant communities. Though the export of pure Jindo dogs was regulated under Korean laws, Korean immigrants and American servicemen have been bringing over Jindo dogs since the late 1980's. Korean Jindo owners in Los Angeles, CA established a Jindo breed club in 1993 and started conducting shows in 1995. In 1998, the United Kennel Club, the second largest dog registry in the U.S., recognized the Jindo. An assortment of rare breed organizations also recognizes the breed.



2005 Jindo Dog Association of America show

In the United Kingdom, there were a few Jindo dogs brought over by Korean immigrants as well, but only the Jindo Island dogs from the 2002 import group are considered official. At this time, only they and their descendants can be registered with The Kennel Club. The Jindo breed was recognized in 2005.

On a much grander, international scale, the Korean Jindo received full breed recognition in 2005 by the Federation of Cynologique Internationale as FCI Standard No. 334. They were formally approved at the World Dog Show held in Argentina in July 2005.

III. Characteristics of a Jindo

1. **Loyal towards owners, aloof towards strangers.** Once a Jindo chooses a person as its master, the Jindo will form a very tight bond with that person. They can be described as a one-person or one-family dog. They are usually not interested in receiving affection from complete strangers and even well-socialized dogs may show indifference towards attempts to befriend them.

It is possible to re-home a Jindo, but the amount of time needed to gain the dog's loyalty depends much on how the dog was raised by the previous owner, how the new owner treats the dog, and the personality of the individual dog.

2. **Strong Hunting Instinct.** The Korean Jindo has a strong natural instinct to chase and hunt small animals and deer as their ancestors did on Jindo island. Interestingly, Jindos differ from some northern breeds in that they will sometimes bring back their trophies to their owners instead of consuming it for themselves.

In the distant past, some lines have been utilized in the hunting of dangerous animals such as tigers and mountain boars found on the Korean mainland. The Jindo's reputation for bravery and boldness evolves partly from this history.

3. **Watchful, Territorial.** Jindos are very alert and watchful guardians of their territories. They are very discerning about the happenings of their neighborhood, and they rarely bark without just cause.

They will follow the lead of their masters in accepting welcomed guests and regular visitors, but they can be serious dogs in repelling uninvited strangers.



4. **Clean, Respectful.** The Jindo keeps itself as a clean dog at a very young age. For Jindos who have learned to be respectful of their master's property, they can be very easy to house-train. Counter-surfing is not a common complaint due to the same reason.

5. **Intelligent, Independent.** The Jindo is a very intelligent dog with great problem-solving skills, but they are also rather independent. A rapport between owner and dog must be present in order to obtain the cooperation of a Jindo.

IV. Appearance of a Typical Jindo

There is a wide range in height/weight of a Jindo, but they are usually 19-21 inches high at the shoulder and 35-45 lbs. They have a well-balanced body and a primitive spitz appearance with their double-coat, triangular ears, and upright tail. Tails can be found straight or curled, although too curled is frowned upon.



Most Jindo organizations recognize five coat colors: yellow, white, black & tan, gray, and tiger-brindle. A few organizations permit solid black and pinto. Colored dogs usually show a creamy white color on the underbelly, chest, and lower cheeks. By far, the two most common colors in the Jindo breed are yellow and white.

Distinctions between males and females should be noticeable immediately. Males typically have larger heads and wider muzzles than females.



Jindos carry a great deal of breed type in their heads. A view from the top should give an impression of a blunt triangle. The rounded topskull should be free from wrinkles.



The thickly furred ears are very expressive and mobile, but at rest, they lie off to the side of the head rather than on top of the head. The bones and muscles of the underjaw are very developed and there should be abundant cheek hairs.

The eyes, which are always a shade of brown, are either almond or roundish in shape with the corners upturn towards the outside of the ear.

V. Differences between the Jindo and other Breeds

The Korean Jindo can often be mistaken for several breeds and breed mixes. Here lies a brief summary listing the differences found between typical purebreds.

Jindo vs. Shiba



(left= male Jindo, right=male Shiba)



(left= female Jindo, right = male Shiba)

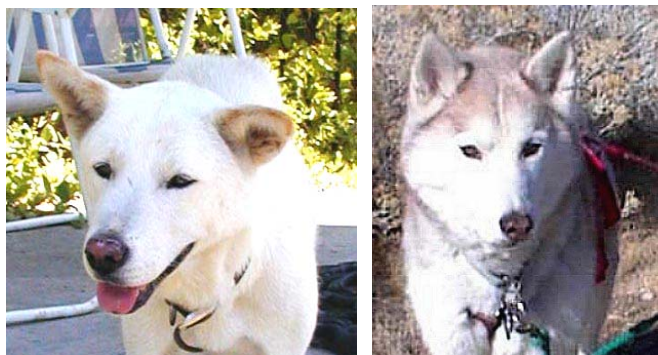
Jindo	Shiba
Height 19-21 inches Weight 35-45 lbs	Height 13-16 inches Weight 20-30 lbs
Coat colors: yellow, white, black/tan, grey, brindle.	Coat colors: red, black/tan, sesame with urajiro. Solid cream color occurs but is considered a fault.
Straight up to single-rolled tail	Sickle forward to double-curved tail
Head is longer/larger in proportion to the body.	Head is compact and muzzle is refined. Head carriage higher.
Temperament more owner-orientated	“Me”, “myself”, and “mine”



(left=female Jindo, right =female Shiba)

Jindo vs. Siberian Husky

Jindo	Siberian Husky
Height 19-21 inches Weight 35-45 lbs	Height 20-23 inches Weight 35-60 lbs
Coat colors: yellow, white, black/tan, gray, brindle.	Comes in all colors but grey/white most common. Markings on the head are distinct.
Ear set at side of head with a broad space between the ears	Ear set high on the head and set close to one another
Eye color brown	Eye color brown or blue
Tail is held up unless dog is uncertain	Trailing tail when dog is in repose, tail curled up at attention



(left = Jindo, right = Siberian Husky)

Jindo vs. Chow

Jindo	Chow
Height 19-21 inches Weight 35-45 lbs	Height 17-20 inches Weight 45-70 lbs
Coat colors: yellow, white, black/tan, gray, brindle.	Coat colors: red, black, blue, cinnamon, cream
Medium-length double coat	Two coat types – shorter “smooth”, longer “rough”
Eye corners upturned	Eyes corners downturned due to skin
Tight, wrinkles-free head	Scowl or sad expression due to wrinkles or loose skin
Rounded muzzle with smooth transition to cheeks	Squarer, bulkier muzzle with padding
Moderate leg angulation	Straight legs, little angulation
Pink tongue	Solid blue-black tongue



(left = Jindo, right = Chow)

VI. Common Questions About the Jindo

Q: Do they shed?

A: Yes, Jindos and all double-coated breeds go through a major shed twice a year.

Q: How are they with other dogs?

A: Most Jindos are dominant among dogs. Though there are exceptions, the average Jindo in the average home will not do well with another dog of the same sex.

Q: How are they with cats and other animals?

A: Jindos are a hunting and guardian breed and thus they will hunt and kill strange cats and small animals intruding on their territory. They can learn to accept family cats and livestock if introduced as a puppy though.



Q: How are they with children?

A: Jindos that have been socialized with children will be friendly and gentle towards them, but they do not have the reknown tolerance of a golden retriever or the high pain threshold of a bully breed. Children need to be taught how to treat dogs, and parents should always supervise a child's interaction with any dog.

Q: Are they good apartment dogs?

A: Most Jindos are happiest when exercised on a consistant basis. An apartment owner must be committed to giving a Jindo brisk, 30 minute walks at least twice a day. It's a good idea to formally introduce the Jindo to adjacent neighbors so they learn to quickly regard them as regulars.

Q: How long do they live?

A: The average is 14 years when maintained in good condition.

Q: What genetic diseases occur in the breed?

A: There aren't a lot of records kept on the matter, but Jindos are relatively healthy except for the occasional cases of hypothyroidism.

Q: How easy is it to train a Jindo?

A: When one trains a Jindo, one has to keep in mind that their breed characteristics. As one-owner or one-family dogs, they do best when trained by their owners and not by strangers. As intelligent dogs, they can rapidly learn commands, but they can be bored by tedious repetition. As observant and independent dogs, they can seem to do reliable recalls in an enclosed environment, but the majority will take off after prey in an open environment.