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## **Characteristics and Description of the Border Collie**

Border Collies usually are rough coat (long), smooth coat (short), curly coat, and everything in-between. Dark brown eyes are most common but they can be light brown, amber, yellow, blue, green, merle and mismatched or two colors can occur. Their ears can be erect or prick, semi-erect, old fashioned tag ear or dropped and are as diverse as the dogs.

They are a medium sized dog, height is between 19 to 22 inches for a male and between 18 to 21 inches for a female. Weight is 30 to 45 pounds for a male and between 27 to 42 pounds for females. Their lifespan is from 10 to 17 years with average being 14 years. They are a spectacularly hardy dog, their strong bones enables them to run so gracefully and effortlessly. Their stamina and agility allows them to remain active for long periods of time.

Their body is slightly longer than they are tall. A relatively flat skull that is moderate in width. The skull and muzzle are about the same length, with a moderate stop. Their strong teeth meet in a scissors bite. Oval eyes and medium ears are set well apart. Their front legs are straight when looking at them from the front, slightly sloping when looking from the side. Medium sized tail has a low set, reaching the hock. Dewclaws are usually removed as a puppy. Their double coat is weather resistant, dense and close fitting. They need regular brushing and combing to keep their coat shiny, healthy and to help shed their undercoat.

The Border Collie is highly intelligent and able to be trained to a high degree. Their speed, stamina and trainability are the key factors for all dog sports. They thrive on praise. They excel in most dog sports, excelling in agility skills, obedience, sheepdog herding trials, Flyball, Frisbee and Disc dogs. In England at most agility trials the Border Collie dogs run separately because it is so hard for other breeds to compete with them. They are used in search and rescue, narcotics sniffing, and therapy dogs. They can be great family dogs, with the right training. It goes without saying they have great herding instincts.

One of the feature's of the Border Collie is the "eye", which is the stare they use to make the sheep turn and move. Their ability to work livestock has become legendary. Their instinct to drive the sheep back to their master has enabled them to be the dominant breed in herding dogs.



**All of us at Look Back Border Collie Rescue  
wish to thank Carole from  
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<http://www.bordercolliemuseum.org>**



**Also thanks to All Border Collies for using their website for this article.  
<http://www.allbordercollies.com>**