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## **Dog Adoption – Australian Cattle Dog Traits – Australian Cattle Dog Adoption**

*The Australian Cattle Dog was developed in Australia in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century to herd cattle over vast, rugged terrain. Originally called Queensland Blue Heelers, they herd cattle by crouching behind them and nipping their heels but without the constant barking common to many other herding breeds. Cattle Dogs are extremely intelligent and generally easy to train but, if you're thinking about a Cattle Dog adoption, you need to understand the main Cattle Dog traits.*

- **Cattle Dogs make great watchdogs** – Some of the most pronounced Cattle Dog traits help make them great watchdogs and family protectors. Cattle Dogs are alert, watchful and naturally suspicious of strangers. They are tireless, loyal and devoted to their job and family. They love to work and can work a long time without a break.
- **Smaller children could trigger herding instincts in Cattle Dogs** – If you are considering a Cattle Dog adoption and have young children, remember one of the Cattle Dog traits is that they herd by nipping. The natural play pattern of young children – running and squealing – triggers the heeling instinct so they may chase and nip at the children. They may also chase small animals and other pets. Cattle Dogs are good with older children but without early obedience training and socialization, they may try to dominate the entire family “pack.”
- **Cattle dogs need work and a positive challenge** – An important cattle dog trait to remember is that they must have a job to do or they will find an unacceptable job for themselves – and they can be destructive if bored. They need more than just a walk on a leash – they need a long daily workout that will give them both mental challenge and hard physical exercise. This is not an apartment dog – they need a big yard where they can run around if your Cattle Dog adoption is to be successful.
- **Cattle Dogs need experienced ownership** – Because of the Cattle Dog traits mentioned, this breed is not a good breed for inexperienced dog owners. They are extremely active and need human companions who will spend a lot of time with them – and they need obedience training. They are very smart but can be stubborn – so firm, consistent training with a determined handler is essential after a cattle dog adoption.



Information sources: [ASPCA Complete Guide to Dogs](#) by Sheldon L. Gerstenfeld, DVM;  
[Barron's Encyclopedia of Dog Breeds](#) (Second Edition) by D. Caroline Coile, Ph.D;  
[Dogs for Kids: Everything You Need to Know About Dogs](#) by Kristin Mehus-Roe;  
[The Encyclopedia of Dog Breeds](#) by Juliette Cunliffe; and [The Illustrated Directory of Dogs](#) by Juliette Cunliffe.

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