

# MLP TEMPERAMENT TRAITS & DISPOSITION



MY LUXE PUPS  
mini bernese mountain dogs

With puppies, some temperament traits are stable, and some are adjustable. While there are many additional traits we can look at, I have found these to be crucial in determining puppy placements for service, therapy, facility and family pets.

Start making note of temperament traits when puppies reach six (6) weeks.

Stable Traits	Adjustable Traits
1. Assertiveness (Human and Dog)	1. Confidence
2. Motivation	2. Nerve Strength / Resiliency
3. Energy Level	3. Touch Tolerance (Compliance only-not if they like it)
4. Prey Drive (Intensity)	4. Sound Sensitivity
5. Human Focus	5. Sound Sensitivity
6. Tenderhearted	

In addition to traits that we examine during puppy evaluations, there are a variety of additional characteristics that puppies exhibit. From six weeks old, you can start making observations that will help to build a more complete picture about the puppy. This information can help you guide buyers as they choose between puppies.

TYPE OF PUPPY	WHAT WE SEE	WHAT WE CAN DO
The Whiner	Whining/Howling/Crying – Vocalizes to Self-Soothe	Determine if the puppy truly needs something. If you have cuddled and cared for the puppy and all their needs are met, then put the puppy down to self soothe or “cry it out”. This is what the mother does. Make sure to take time to leave the puppy alone daily to build up their independence.
The Independent	Last to come when called. Difficult to get involved.	Is this puppy a wallflower or fearful of engagement? Determine as such and avoid forcing them to do things that will only frustrate you. Find what motivates them the most and use it (treats sparingly). These puppies are excellent for young and busy families who are often gone during the day.
The Fearful	Fear when any change happens. Anything New: Cries, shakes, etc.	The goal is to build confidence, practice startle recovery and build trust at the pup’s speed. The worst thing you can do is force a fearful puppy into a situation. It is imperative that things are done in stages as the puppy acclimates to the world, people and dogs being safe and even fun! Empower them.
The Bossy	Lacks self-control, quickly learns to climb & take. Barks to boss.	These dogs need to be given purpose and be kept busy. Reward only calm and focused behavior. If a puppy is acting up, they should be removed into a time out. No love and attention when they are being demanding. Exercise and engagement keep this dog happy and obedient. An engaging family that is available is essential for this puppy’s lifetime success.
The Bully	The instigator. Always pinning down littermates with gusto.	These puppies are learning their dominance in the pack. If aggressive behavior starts and the counter puppy responds and the bully backs down, this is great. When the bully continues to dominate the other puppy, they need to be removed and have a consequence of time out. It is essential to watch closely and repeat the removal process until this puppy learns consequences and appropriate behavior.