

## **The Truth About Corgis: From a Pembroke Himself**

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*I hear and read what people say about Corgis. It is clear that we are adored — as we should be — but there are many misconceptions that need to be addressed. It is my goal in writing this epistle, to help you humans better understand the PWC so you may serve us better.*

### **A Brief History**

PWCs have been around since about the 10th century. The exact breeds that were crossed have been lost in the Welsh mist (we Welsh are known to turn an occasional poetic phrase). The goal was to develop a breed capable of herding cattle, chasing vermin, and guarding the family... that would not eat the Welsh out of house and home. Overall, the development of the breed was a stunning success. The result is a low slung breed with a lovely fox-like face, charming tailless rear, and tall erect ears. The eating part... that is another matter that we will discuss later.

For many years, the Cardigan Welsh Corgi and Pembroke Welsh Corgi were lumped together as a single breed. We don't even look alike. The Cardigan is bigger, heavier, and has a tail. If the Cardigan were human, they would drive trucks, drink beer and bowl. The Pembroke is strictly white-collar management. However, this mistake was eventually corrected, and the two are now considered as completely separate breeds. Thus it does not fall to me to point out the obvious confusion.

In regard to Corgi history, there is a myth that humans with a sentimental side like to tell. They say that Corgis were once the steeds and carriage animal for fairies and elves. How silly is that? The more you know of Corgis, the more that you will understand how unlikely it is that we would have been ridden or pulled coaches. However, we have nothing against a nice ride in any vehicle, particularly if it is accompanied by a nice meal along the way.

### **The Biggest Misconception**

I know that you humans never purposefully hurt our feelings. However, the human mind simply does not have the clarity of the Corgi. Let me share two examples.

Humans love to refer to Corgis as, "Big dogs in a small dog body." This is terribly wrong. Papillons are big dogs in a small dog body. Corgis are big dogs with short legs. If I jump on you, you will know this is true. Just knock off the small dog stuff.

Occasionally things are written about the Corgi that are even more shocking. Recently, on the Internet, I saw a reference to the PWC as, "...a hair covered Twinkie." (For those of you who do not live in the U.S., the Twinkie is a packaged yellow oblong sponge cake stuffed with white goo). The Twinkie is so sugary that excessive consumption of Twinkies was once used as a defense in a murder case... really. But I digress... Given the Corgi's tenacity, determination, and strength of character, this kind of description must be banned. I propose a short suspension from Corgi ownership for humans who indulge in this sort of comparison.

On the other hand, Corgis appreciate what Laughing Dog reader Christine Gray wrote, "Corgis are bullets of muscle." Corgi kisses to Christine.

Many good things are written about the Corgi's personality. Humans recognize our alertness, intelligence, and boldness. You praise us for our outgoing approach to life. You recognize that Corgis are a presence and rightfully expect status as a full family member.

But after writing all that good stuff about the charming PWC, a few Corgi owners lose it. Several folks have suggested that their dogs have a tendency toward something called megalomania. Someone dared to put the following in writing:

*I must mention the Corgi tendency toward megalomania and that attempted coups and power grabs are common. (Ellen Clary)*

According to Webster, megalomania is a mental disorder characterized by delusions of grandeur.

No way! Corgis have no mental disorders. We just know exactly what we want and how we want it done. We are just waiting in the wings for our big break, the day when our humans decide to step down and put us in charge of the food distribution system. All I can say is, we're ready.

The bottom line is that we could run the house if we were allowed. But generally, we are able to work out a partnership with our humans. However, every now and then, a regime change is essential to free a starving Corgi or because of gross mismanagement. Humans should be grateful that we are so watchful.

### **Corgis and Food**

As I mentioned when we were talking history, one of the goals of early Corgi breeders was to develop an "easy keeper." This part of breed development was also a success. Corgis will not eat you out of house and home. However, the problem is that our appetite belongs to the big dog that we really are. We need food throughout the day to keep our blood sugar up.

The Corgis' relationship with food is greatly exaggerated. It is blatantly untrue that we will eat until we explode. Corgis have a built-in monitor to stop one bite short of explosion.

Corgis themselves have great admiration for other Corgis who demonstrate an assertive approach to finding and consuming food. The Corgi Hall of Fame recently inducted a new member based the following two stories from her owner:

*Our suitcases were on the floor, closed but not locked. We came home to find that the dog had gotten into a bulk box of Power Bars. She ate 10. We caught her with the 11th. The 12th was stashed under a couch cushion for later.*

*Minutes before she was euthanized in our home, our old gal ate ½ pound of turkey. She was a Corgi to the end.*

This dog is my hero!

### **Special Corgi Traits**

There are ten other items that make us special as a breed.

1. Border Collies are famous for "THE EYE", a non-stop stare that can stop a sheep in its tracks. The Golden Retriever is renowned for "THE EYE SHIFT", an eye movement that steers humans to the tennis ball. The PWC's ability exceeds both. The Corgi specializes in BRAIN BORING. Brain boring is the ability to stare at a human and suck key information out of their mind. Corgis use this skill daily to gather information about meals, times that they might sneak up on the kitchen table for a nap, and possible outings that are being planned.
2. Corgis are Olympic quality shedders. This is good. One Corgi will shed enough to assemble another Corgi in about a week, according to Ellen Clary. There are never too many Corgis.
3. Corgis are able to stretch out on the floor or bed with their legs straight back. This allows them to pose as a flying squirrel and beg for nuts.
4. Recent research substantiates what Corgi owners have always known. That is, Corgis are able to hear a crumb hit the floor at an average of 135 feet. One Corgi owner tells a story of her Corgis, who were sleeping soundly upstairs, waking at the smallest sound of a cookie tin being opened. This is not unusual. I once heard a grain of rice hit the tile in the kitchen while I was disciplining the neighbor from the back corner of my yard.
5. The Corgi specializes in an activity called turbo FRAP, which stands for Frantic Random Acts of Play. Rachel Harris says this game involves running at top speed around the yard or furniture generally in a figure eight, wearing a huge grin and appearing temporarily possessed. The reality is that we are running for two reasons. The first is to take our mind off the fact that we are starving. The second is to impress on our owners how many calories we are burning which certainly calls for a larger ration.
6. In addition to their running ability, Corgis quickly master a quick stop on linoleum or tile in order to slide a maximum distance. Two friends recently went head to head in a "slide off." In a best-out-of-three slide format, Peanut won with a spectacular distance of eight feet and three inches.

7. The Corgi who lives with larger dogs seems to display an interest in dentistry. Deb Eldredge writes, “We had to remove Flash from Bubba’s throat on more than one occasion.” This activity is actually based on a small hope that a bit of food will be found lodged in the larger dog’s teeth.
8. Corgis not only collect stuffed animals, they also kill and disembowel them. Corgi owners must either replace them frequently or re-stuff and stitch. Corgis enjoy the ritual of a stuffed animal surgery.
9. While other dogs are learning to ignore food distractions during training, the Corgi is able to pick up treats without breaking stride. This practical skill earns talented dogs the title of Hoover Dog (HD).
10. Despite their short stature, the Corgi is very athletic. They will consider herding, tracking, freestyle, and agility on a “will-work-for-food basis.” In agility, the often speedy Corgi has become famous for its ability to top off a great run by knocking down a single bar. The Corgi believes this to be a very amusing dog joke. Agility Corgis bet among themselves to see who can run entire courses cleanly and then, just when their handler’s hopes are soaring, knock down the last bar.

### **In Conclusion**

I hope what I have written will help you to understand us better. With just a little more food in each Corgi bowl and a little more attention to what you say and write, I know you humans can meet our standards.

### **References**

This article has relied heavily on stories and anecdotes sent by Corgi lovers. Laughing Dog and CH Napoleon de Corgi of Aaaaberwaith want to thank the following folks who are very funny: Ellen Clary, Deb Eldredge, Christine Grey, Rachel Harris, Noelle Noble, Jamie Rarebit, Esther Wheeler, Marti Wiseman, and Valerie Wood.

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In addition, Susan Ewing’s lovely book, *The Pembroke Welsh Corgi* and the National Club’s website, [www.pembrokecorgi.org](http://www.pembrokecorgi.org), were used as references.