



**I AM
JAX,
PROTECTOR OF
THE RANCH**

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Albert Whitman & Company
Chicago, Illinois

About Livestock Guardian Dogs

For as long as people have raised livestock, they have looked for ways to protect them. As a result, livestock guardian dogs (LGDs) have been on the job for thousands of years.

Today, there are at least forty breeds of LGDs. And while all guardian dogs have similar jobs, they protect many different kinds of animals around the world, from sheep and goats and cattle to llamas and alpacas and ostriches.

LGDs come face-to-face with all kinds of predatory critters, too, including coyotes, mountain lions, cheetahs, leopards, bears, wolves—even baboons! It might seem strange, but the dogs also play an important role in protecting these animals. Wild animals that are caught preying on livestock might get in big trouble with livestock owners, who need their animals to make a living. Guardian dogs help keep wild animals in the wild and those being raised by people out of harm's way.

What It Takes

Livestock guardian dogs do not live inside family homes, like many dogs do. To be successful, they need to spend most of their time with the animals they protect, starting during puppyhood. At just a couple months old, LGDs start living with the members of the flock or herd they will guard, bonding with them and becoming like family. And while it's important that the dogs become comfortable working with humans and learn to obey commands, their home is in the fields, not in the house.

After about six months, livestock guardian dogs' instincts start to kick in, and they naturally start to defend the animals they've bonded with. Good guardian dogs are at home and relaxed around their livestock. But they are also great at noticing threats, and they have the strength and the smarts to protect their flock or herd.

Livestock guardian dogs have important and difficult jobs. But behind their big, tough looks, they are a lot like other dogs. They need care and attention from humans, including consistent contact with people and regular trips to the vet. And, like all dogs, they return that care and attention with loyalty and love.



LGDs in this Book



Great Pyrenees

The Great Pyrenees was bred to stop predators from attacking sheep in the snowy Pyrenees Mountains between France and Spain. Today, Pyrs are a common livestock guardian breed, but can also make great pets!

Height: 25–32 inches

Weight: 85+ pounds

Life Span: 10–12 years

Coat: All white, or white with markings of gray, tan, or red-brown

Known for: Smarts and calm



Anatolian Shepherd

The history of Anatolian shepherds goes back about 6,000 years to the mountains of Turkey. They are strong and independent and very devoted to those they protect.

Height: 27–29 inches

Weight: 80–150 pounds

Life Span: 11–13 years

Coat: Light brown and white coat, dark brown snout

Known for: Loyalty, independence

