

Highly Sensitive Dog (HSD) questionnaire

Give each statement about your dog a score between 1 (strongly disagree; does not apply at all) and 7 (strongly agree; applies completely).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree; does not apply at all	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree nor disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree; applies completely

A. Easily excited	Score
1. My dog is easily stressed, is easily overwhelmed by situations.	
2. My dog gets nervous quickly or is often nervous.	
3. My dog is generally relaxed, can cope well with stress.	
4. My dog is emotionally stable; <i>i.e.</i> , s/he is mostly even-tempered and not easily unnerved.	
5. My dog tends to be uncertain and/or careful.	
6. My dog startles easily.	
7. My dog has problems adapting to changes in everyday life (<i>e.g.</i> , changes in routine, visitors, <i>etc.</i>) and/or bigger changes in life (<i>e.g.</i> , change of partner, rearranging furniture, going on holidays, moving home, <i>etc.</i>).	
8. My dog has a tendency to be mistrustful.	
9. My dog easily adapts to new environments and can relax there.	
10. My dog has trouble when people touch her/him or when things touch her/him (<i>e.g.</i> , harness, coat, wet leaves, <i>etc.</i>).	
11. My dog needs a sense of security.	
12. It takes a long time for my dog to calm down after an arousing event.	
13. My dog has problems when left alone outside and I move out of sight.	
B. Easily overwhelmed	
14. My dog is always on the alert, always has her/his “antennae up.”	
15. My dog observes everything that is happening around her/him.	
16. My dog seems to absorb everything that is happening around her/him.	
17. My dog is easily excitable, be it through positive or negative stimuli.	

18. My dog is reactive; <i>i.e.</i> , quickly perceives small stimuli and reacts quickly and/or strongly to them.	
19. My dog reacts strongly to visual stimuli.	
20. My dog has a subtle perception; <i>i.e.</i> , notices a lot or almost everything.	
21. My dog tends to be restless.	
22. My dog is demanding.	
C. Emotionally sensitive	
23. My dog is sensitive.	
24. My dog reacts to small changes in voice; <i>i.e.</i> , changes in intonation and volume.	
25. My dog reacts strongly to punishment.	
26. My dog is emotional; <i>i.e.</i> , reacts strongly to positive and/or negative events.	
27. My dog reacts when we (people) argue at home.	
28. My dog is attentive.	
29. My dog notices small changes.	
30. My dog is biddable (obedient, docile, amicable).	
31. My dog seems thoughtful.	
32. My dog is intelligent.	
TOTAL	
divide (÷) by 32	
HSD score	

Add the scores for all 32 statements and then divide the total by 32 to get your dog's HSD score, which will be somewhere between 1 and 7.

The average HSD score for domestic dogs is between 3 and 5. Highly sensitive dogs have HSD scores of 5 to 7.

What if your dog has a HSD of exactly 5? Interpretation of that number is up to you. How many of the 32 statements did you agree with in some way? The more of those you have, particularly if the 5+ scores are spread across at least two of the three categories, the more likely it is that your dog is generally sensitive, rather than simply being strongly triggered by one or two things, based on her/his unique life history.