



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DACHSHUND

The beauty and personality of the Dachshund have fascinated artists for generations. This famous painting of Earl Satin was created by Lilian Cheviot in 1906.

The Dachshund is, quite simply, the “right dog” for many people. Small in size, even the largest Standard Dachshund weighs only about 30 pounds. Easy to maintain in good physical condition, the Dachshund doesn't require long runs over many acres. Possessing a friendly, companionable personality, the Dachshund charms his way into the hearts of all who get to know him.

Though he can be rather stubborn at times, his behavior



easily can be modified by a wise owner who quickly changes the subject and gets the dog to focus on some new activity. In other words, the owner refuses to recognize the dog's obstinacy and thereby prevents a repetition of the undesirable behavior. Physical rough handling only makes an even-tempered Dachshund become aggressive.

The fact that Dachshunds love people, especially children and the elderly, endears them to the general population. Indeed, Dachshunds are among the most popular breeds of dog in the USA, Germany and Britain. Although the original purpose of hunting is no longer the main reason to breed Dachshunds, they possess

Dachshunds are dogs that appeal to many people because they are friendly, intelligent and portable.



so many other desirable qualities that they will retain their popular status for many years to come.

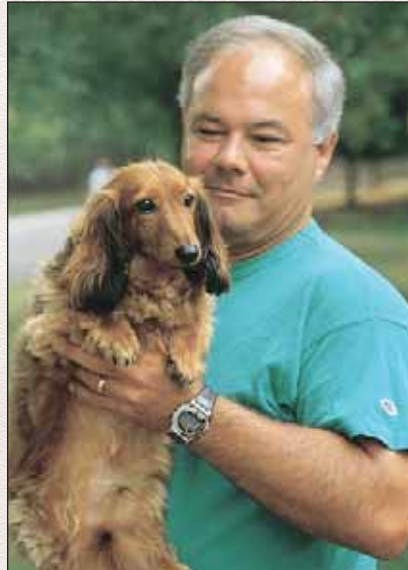
However, for the few Dachshund owners who are interested in preserving that hunting trait, there are Dachshund field trials. In America, trials were instituted in 1935. These competitions judge the dogs' ability and style in finding and retrieving game such as rabbits. The dogs must possess good noses (to smell the prey), courage to pursue the prey, keenness for the hunt, perseverance and willingness to get the job done.

All Dachshunds, regardless of variety or size, compete together in field trials. At a trial, a Dachshund is a Dachshund. There are, however, various stakes or classes for dogs of different ages and experience. Once a dog earns a field trial champion title, he enters the Dachshund history book of distinction and his progeny are much sought after.

The rules for field trials, obedience and agility competitions, and breed conformation classes, are spelled out in detail by both breed clubs and kennel clubs. In order to produce dogs that will achieve success in competition, whether conformation or performance events, breeders must understand the criteria set forth in their breed's standard as well as the abilities that the dogs must possess.

DOGS, DOGS, GOOD FOR YOUR HEART!

People usually purchase dogs for companionship, but studies show that dogs can help to improve their owners' health and level of activity, as well as lower a human's risk of coronary heart disease. Without even realizing it, when a person puts time into exercising, grooming and feeding a dog, he also puts more



time into his own personal health care. Dog owners establish more routine schedules for their dogs to follow, which can have positive effects on a human's health. Dogs also teach us patience, offer unconditional love and provide the joy of having a furry friend to pet!

Dachshunds are odorless and exceptionally clean dogs. The Miniature is mature by 12 months of age, while the Standard may not be fully mature until he reaches 18 months of age. Dachshunds are exceptionally long-lived dogs, with many living until 12 to 14 years of age. Regardless of size or variety, the Dachshund is easily maintained and managed, thus making it a most desirable companion.

ONE-PERSON DOG

Some Dachshunds will attempt to attach themselves to only one person in a



family while ignoring the other family members. This situation can be avoided if the entire family participates in activities with the dog as well as practices obedience exercises with him. The dog must learn that he is part of the whole family pack, not just one isolated member.

WHO MAKES AN IDEAL DACHSHUND OWNER?

The ideal Dachshund owner is a person who enjoys life with his dog and also enjoys the company of other people. Dachshunds are very social dogs, though they are often particularly devoted to one owner. The Dachshund is always interested in doing enjoyable things within its own physical capabilities. Therefore, the person who will derive the most pleasure from owning and living with a Dachshund is a gregarious individual who chooses activities that can include his dog.

Playing with the dog indoors and out, the owner finds fetch games of particular interest to Dachshunds. Participating in obedience and agility competitions is most rewarding for owner and dog alike. Visiting the park and taking reasonable walks are also much enjoyed by your little companion. Of course, snuggling beneath the covers on a cold, rainy day is always at the top of any Dachshund's list of favorite things to do. Thus, an individual who enjoys a lazy afternoon with a good book and a Dachshund also makes an ideal owner.

Finally, because of the Dachshund's intelligence and versatility, the ideal owner is a person who has time to spend and interests to share with his dog. Dachshunds do not like being left alone for long periods of time and

then, once the owner comes home, being ignored even more of the time. Dachshunds do best when they're mentally stimulated and made to feel appreciated and like members of the family.

BREED VERSATILITY

I'd like you now to meet two Dachshunds I know. Both are very much loved by their families and both are happy dogs, yet they have very different lifestyles.

"Whiskers" is a one-year-old neutered male. He's a Longhaired Standard, black and tan in color. By nature he's a quiet dog who loves children and family friends. He's typically "Dachshund stubborn," yet easily trained because he enjoys learning new things and doing things with his owners. Whiskers gets on well with other dogs and particularly loves a four-year-old female mixed-breed who shares his home. He also does well with other household residents, such as the two cats and two hamsters. When asked what was the best thing about Whiskers, the owners responded quickly, "He's very mellow—like us!"

Now meet "Tootsie." She's a Smooth Miniature, red in color, who was deserted by her owners at three-and-a-half years of age. Fortunately for Tootsie, she was rescued by a lady who enjoyed dog obedience competition and had always wanted to own a



Dachshund. Tootsie began obedience training and soon amassed a list of obedience wins that would impress even the toughest judge, quickly earning her title. Then she began agility training and fell in love with the sport. Today, at ten years of age, Tootsie has earned four agility titles in two organizations. The list of Tootsie's accomplishments

The ideal Dachshund owner is devoted to the breed, always delighted to spend time bonding with and caring for his dogs. Owners, John Merriman and Bill Tacke.

Dachshund



The lovely Elsa is enjoying a sunny afternoon in the garden. Now in her senior years, Elsa still retains her Dachshund spirit and affectionate personality.

is almost bigger than she is!

At home, Tootsie sleeps in owner Sunny Simpson's bed under the covers (a place familiar to many Dachshunds). Although Tootsie was never socialized with children when she was a young puppy, she tolerates them as long as her owner supervises the

encounters. She does, however, love having guests visit their home and is an excellent ambassador for all Dachshunds. Her owner reports that, having lived with Tootsie for seven years, she would never be without a Dachshund. "They are even better than I thought they'd be!" she claims.

Despite the differences in lifestyle between Whiskers and Tootsie, both dogs are well-adjusted and cherished members of their human families. These two dogs serve as examples of how versatile the Dachshund can be as he makes his life with humans and brings his owners great pleasure and comfort.

Given the long back of the Dachshund and its short legs, the breed encounters certain problems of which owners must be keenly aware. This young Wire-haired Miniature Dachshund appears to be the picture of good health.



HEALTH CONCERNS IN DACHSHUNDS

Generally speaking, most dogs are square creatures, about as high from the ground to the top of their shoulders as they are from the front of their chests to their rumps. Each of their four legs is placed directly under the trunk of the body at the four corners. Their necks are gently arched and their heads balance out their body size: little heads for little dogs, big heads for big dogs. Dachshunds, however, are different. Their long, low-to-the-ground body type resembles a train with an engine in the front, a caboose at the end and the cars in the middle. Their long, swaying tails even add to their length, to accentuate how very different they are!

Because of their unique skeletal structure, Dachshunds have the potential to experience both environmental and genetic problems common to long-bodied dogs. Living in an environment that is oblivious to their special conformation, Dachshunds often are subjected to many hazards. Jumping, excessive stair-climbing and other high-impact activities usually result in serious diseases and conditions of the vertebrae. When genetically inferior dogs are bred, they often produce genetically inferior puppies. These puppies, in turn, grow up to develop serious skeletal conditions that are difficult

YOUNG FRIENDS

When teaching a Dachshund to accept and like children, be sure that the



children move slowly rather than with erratic, fast motions. Dachshunds see fast-moving things as prey and will go after them, even though these “things” might be children. Once the dogs become accustomed to children, they will accept the running and playing of their young human friends.

and/or impossible to correct. In addition, overweight puppies are always at risk. There are many health conditions seen in dogs of many breeds, including Dachshunds. Let’s review some of the major ones here.

MAJOR PROBLEMS

Intervertebral disk disease affects more Dachshunds than all other dogs combined, so naturally it is atop this list of conditions that concern Dachshund owners. Due to the Dachshund’s long-backed construction, owners are advised

SIT!

If a Dachshund refuses to sit with both haunches squarely beneath him and,



instead, sits on one side or the other, he may have a physical reason for doing so. Discuss this habit with your veterinarian to be certain that the dog isn't suffering from some structural problem.

to avoid activities that will strain their backs and spines. IVD, as the disease is known, is marked by herniated disks in the lower back. The disease primarily affects dogs with stunted legs. Affected dogs experience severe pain, usually in the lower back but sometimes in the neck as well. The disease can be treated medically and/or surgically, depending on the severity. Carts for dogs have been devised to assist Dachshunds with rear-quarter paralysis due to severe IVD.

Acanthosis nigricans, unfortunately, seems to be unique to the Dachshund. It is characterized by

dark, thick skin in Dachshund's groin and armpits. While the genetic origin of the disease is unclear, it is certain that affected dogs are not to be bred. Vitamin E supplementation has been used to improve the condition, though no cure is known.

Hypothyroidism, commonly confused with obesity in Dachshunds, is simply the insufficient production of thyroid hormones. In Dachshunds, lymphocytic thyroiditis is most common. Dogs are affected between ages one to three years. Less than half of the Dachshunds affected manifest obesity; most individuals experience recurrent infections and lack of energy. Diagnosis of hypothyroidism is often tricky, though the treatment tends to be direct and affordable.

Epilepsy is a seizure disorder that affects Dachshunds as well as many other breeds of dog. Epileptic dogs can be managed with various veterinary drugs, though some side effects exist, including temporary weakness and increased appetite and thirst.

Eye Problems

A cataract is a cloudiness or film over the lens of the eye, categorized by age of onset, location on the eye and stage of the cloudiness. As it is a hereditary condition, parents should be tested before breeding takes place to ensure that parents are not

BONE PROBLEMS

Surgery is often used to correct genetic bone diseases in dogs. Usually the problems present themselves early in the dog's life and must be treated before bone growth stops.

carrying the genes for cataracts.

Glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness in dogs, is caused by an increase in fluid pressure within the eye. This disease can be hereditary, so parents should be tested prior to breeding. Treatment for glaucoma can be medical or surgical, or both.

Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA), a series of inherited disorders affecting the retina of the eyes, causes visual impairment

that is slow but progressive. Night blindness can be the first sign of trouble. There is no known way to stop onset.

Other eye conditions have also been known to occur in Dachshunds. This list is by no means complete, but is included here to make new owners aware of possible problems in the breed: corneal dystrophy, congenital night blindness, entropion, tear duct anomalies, wall eye, keratoconjunctivitis, microphthalmia and ectasia syndrome.

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS SEEN IN DACHSHUNDS

Discuss the following conditions with your veterinarian and/or your breeder. A better understanding of each of these

According to the AKC standard, the Longhaired's coat should be "sleek, glistening, often slightly wavy" and should give the dog an "elegant appearance."



problems will enlighten the new owner, making him more aware of the breed's congenital, hereditary and environmentally triggered problems. These potential problems include excessive hardening of the long bones, osteoporosis, cutaneous asthenia (also known as Ehlers-Danlos syndrome), renal hypoplasia (problem of the kidneys), diabetes, urinary tract problems and achondroplasia (a genetic bone disease). Hair changes, sluggishness and secondary infections are common and must be treated aggressively by a veterinarian. These symptoms are linked to a potential problem. Owners should be aware that deafness in dappled dogs and von Willebrand's disease (a common blood disease) are genetic.

It's important to note here

that not all Dachshunds will suffer serious physical diseases or problems. However, it is important for the puppy buyer to be aware of the health conditions that can affect the dog he is about to purchase. Healthy parents and a well-informed, caring breeder are the best factors in producing healthy puppies. Many health problems in dogs today can be tested for in very young puppies. Reputable breeders usually have these tests performed so that they can send their puppies off to new homes with certificates of good health. Thus, the new owners can begin raising their puppy in the knowledge that they have chosen a healthy puppy from a quality source. In short, it all boils down to the old saying that knowledge is power—with humans *and* with dogs.

Dachshunds were bred for hunting badgers, thus they are constantly sniffing and staying in close contact with the earth.



MEDICAL PROBLEMS FREQUENTLY SEEN IN DACHSHUNDS

Condition	Age Affected	Cause	Area Affected
Acanthosis Nigricans	Adults	Unknown	Skin
Cataracts	Less than 1 Year	Congenital	Eyes
Cushing's Syndrome	Middle Age to Older	Pituitary Tumor	Endocrine System
Cystine Urolithiasis	Adults	Congenital	Urinary Tract
Elbow Dysplasia	4 to 7 Months	Congenital	Elbow Joint
Epilepsy	6 Months to 3 Years	Congenital	Nervous System
Hip Dysplasia	4 to 9 Months	Congenital	Hip Joint
Hypothyroidism	1 to 3 Years	Lymphocytic Thyroiditis	Endocrine System
Intervertebral Disk Disease	By 1 Year	Congenital	Spinal Column
Medial Patellar Luxation	Adults	Congenital	Kneecaps
Narcolepsy	1 to 5 Months	Congenital	Sleep Disorder
Sebaceous Adenitis	Young Adults	Congenital	Hair Follicles
Progressive Retinal Atrophy	6 to 12 Months	Congenital	Retina
Von Willebrand's Disease	Birth	Congenital	Blood