

Considering a Dachshund

The sassy and sturdy Dachshund comes in a variety of coat types and sizes.

By Allan Reznik

Q. I'm thinking about getting a wirehaired Dachshund. Is there anything you can tell me about their grooming and how their coat will affect my allergies? Is one size variety better than the other?

A. Like the various breeds of wire-haired terriers, the wirehaired Dachshund does not shed but does require periodic stripping of its coat. This is done by hand, using your thumb and forefinger, with the aid of a tool called a stripping knife (basically, a comb with a handle and a metal, serrated edge). Handstripping ensures that the coat maintains its hard, crisp texture, which is essential in the show ring.

If your dog will not be shown and is strictly a pet, the stripping doesn't have to be quite so meticulous, and you might even choose to have your local groomer use electric clippers to buzz down the coat occasionally. Just be aware that once the coat has been clipped, it will lose its characteristic, wiry feel, and will grow in softer, so you will get a fuzzier, less-boxy look.

No one can predict how well you and your allergies will react to the wirehaired Dachshund coat. Your best bet would be to attend a dog show and hang out with some wirehaired Dachshunds, or visit a breeder in her home and see how you comfortable you are stroking, holding, and grooming the dogs.

The two varieties you alluded to in your question are the Miniature and Standard size varieties. Smooth and longhaired Dachshunds come in these two sizes as well. The AKC breed standard specifies that Miniatures must weigh in at 11 pounds or under at a year or more of age. Standards generally weigh between 16 and 32 pounds. Both size varieties are sassy, sturdy, and fun, so the choice really depends on how much dog you want for your house or apartment – and how much coat stripping you want to take on or pay a groomer to do for you.