Cocker Spaniel

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

BREED PROFILE: COCKER SPANIEL

Although the Cocker Spaniel is the smallest member of the Sporting Group, it is more often known and kept as a companion pet. Affectionate, loyal, and an all-around happy breed, it is no surprise that the Cocker Spaniel is the most popular American-born breed.

Interesting Breed Facts:

Popularity: 21st in 2008; with 9,481 registered with the American Kennel Club (AKC).

First recognized as a breed: The history of spaniels dates as far back as 1368; however, the American Cocker Spaniel wasn't developed until the late 1800s. The current breed standard was approved on May 12, 1992.

AKC Grouping: Sporting.

Size: Males measure between 14-1/2" and 15-1/2" high at the shoulders and females measure between 13-1/2" and 14-1/2" high. Both sexes weigh between 21-26 lbs.

Appearance: The Cocker Spaniel has a solid and compact body frame. The head is in proportion to the rest of the body. They have an intelligent and soft look about their face and the eyes are large, slightly almond-shaped, and dark brown. The ears are long and feathered. The muzzle is square-shaped and the nose may be

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	brown, black, or liver in color. The legs are strong and muscular and the feet are compact, large, and round. The coat on the head is short and fine and on the body, the coat is medium-length with an undercoat. The ears, chest, abdomen, and legs are feathered. The coat is silky and may be straight to slightly wavy. Coat colors include black, any other solid color, (light cream, dark red, or brown), and parti-color (black, brown, cream, or red, plus white)
#1 preventable health problem:	Cocker Spaniels are prone to bacterial and yeast infections of the ear. Regular grooming, which entails clipping the hair on cheeks and ears to allow air flow, and following a veterinarian's directions to clean ears at least weekly will help eliminate the problem.
Preferences:	The Cocker Spaniel possesses a fairly high amount of energy. This breed is able to live in smaller quarters as long as his exercise requirements are met. This can be achieved by a game of fetch in the yard, a brisk walk, or some time in the field. Heat and cold are equally tolerated by the Cocker Spaniel.
Best features:	The Cocker Spaniel excels in his tolerance of others. This breed generally does extremely well with other dogs and pets and is able to co-exist with them happily. Children are usually readily accepted by this breed as well. Although the Cocker Spaniel may bark when he sees a stranger, he will more than likely lick them rather than become aggressive. The Cocker Spaniel generally responds well to training. The breed also has a fairly long life span, averaging between 13 and 14 years.
Biggest challenge to owners:	A Cocker Spaniel requires a substantial amount of grooming. Daily brushing is essential, as is professional clipping and bathing several times a month.

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