Basset Hound

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

BREED PROFILE: BASSET HOUND

"Basset" is a word derived from the French for "bas" for low. This fact tells you a lot about this intelligent and gentle creature. A French book on hunting from the 16th century seems to have the first mention of this - wonderful dog. Queen Alexandra helped to popularize the breed by keeping them in the royal kennels in the late 19th century. George Washington was said to own Bassets.

The Basset was bred for hunting rabbits. The fact that his nose is so close to the ground makes this not only possible, but obvious. The Basset Hound is second only to the Bloodhound in trailing ability. He will hunt alone or in a pack. One theory about the Basset's origin is that French monks tried to breed a hound that would be slower moving (thus shorter legged) so as to be easily followed on foot. The Basset was brought to England in the mid 1800s, but it was not until 20-odd years later that the British became really interested in the breed.

The Basset is a sturdy animal, gentle of disposition and a devoted member of his family. Some consider the Basset Hound an ideal housedog.

Interesting Breed Facts:

Popularity:	33rd in ranking for 2008; with 5,277 registered with the American Kennel Club (AKC).
First recognized as a breed:	First recognized in 1875 by the Kennel Club (Great Britain) and by the AKC in 1885.
AKC Grouping:	Hound.
Size:	Height should not exceed 14" at the shoulder for either sex. Weight for these heavily-boned dogs is surprisingly heavy: for males, between 55 to 70 lbs.; for females, 45 to 65 lbs.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*

Appearance:	According to the AKC breed standard, the ideal Basset Hound is a short-legged dog that is heavier in bone than any other breed of dog when size is considered. His tail has a slight curvature and is carried high. He has a hard, smooth, short coat, with loose skin. Ears are long and set very low. The head is large with a well-domed skull. Eyes are soft and slightly sunken and often carry a sad look. Any recognized hound color is acceptable and Bassets range from mostly black to lemon yellow and white. Pattern of markings is unimportant.
#1 Preventable Health Problem:	Obesity. Basset owners report that their dogs are so good at giving "the look" when there's food around that they are practically mesmerized. But obesity can lead to a variety of problems especially in this breed, including stressed joints, heart conditions, and back problems.
Preferences:	A family to love him and plenty of interesting smells.
Best features:	Devoted to his family, and easy to keep.
Biggest challenge to owners:	Obedience training. Although it can be done, like many hunting dogs, the Basset was bred to think for himself, plus has a strong instinct to follow his nose.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*