

A Wee Bit O' History

The Cairn Terrier is a Scottish breed from the Isle of Skye. It is one of the earliest terriers to be identified in the British Isles. It was bred to go after vermin in the cairns (piles of rock) that abound in that region of Scotland. It needed to be agile enough to jump from rock to rock, possess a skill for digging and an unswerving determination to go after the quarry whether it be rodent, fox, badger or otter. It was not unusual for the Cairn to pursue an otter into water if need be. They were often worked in packs and as a result must show character that can get along well, for the most part, with others of its kind.

Why We Look the Way We Do

The Cairn Terrier is a moderate dog in all ways. They must be small enough to manage getting into tight places yet large enough to hold or attack the quarry if necessary. Most Cairns fall into the 11-12 inch height at the shoulders and have a moderate length of leg. They should have large teeth with a good scissor bite, a double coat to repel water and dirt, fat front feet for digging. The tail should be moderately short, thick at the base so that it doubles as a handle should the owner need to pull the Cairn back while in a tunnel. Eyes are brown and overhung with shaggy eyebrows that keep the dirt out of its eyes. The Cairn's body should be of moderate length, strong and well muscled in order to do his job. Ears are upright so that nothing hangs down to get grabbed or caught up while working. Cairns come in all colours from cream to black brindle. No one colour is preferred over another in the show ring. White and black & Tan Cairns do occur and these make perfectly wonderful pets but must not be shown or bred.



Typical Cairn Behavior

Cairns are happy, busy little dogs that adore being with people. They are not a breed that does well segregated from their family by having to live a life out doors. Nonetheless, one must not lose sight of the fact these dogs are terriers and as a result, are quite the independent little thinkers. They learn extremely quickly, but not everything you may want them to learn, and get bored very quickly too. They certainly can be trained in obedience and it is strongly recommended that the Cairn owner and the dog complete at least one session of training. However, even the best trained Cairn off lead in his own fenced backyard is not likely to come on recall if the neighbor's cat or a rabbit happens to scoot by. He will attend to terrier business first and happily get back to you later. Because of this we do not recommend that you walk your Cairn off lead unless in a secure fenced area. People have mistakenly taken their Cairn off lead for a walk in the woods never to see it again once a squirrel, rabbit or a deer makes an appearance.

Many Cairns live with big dogs and other animals very well indeed. Not all Cairns care for big dogs outside of their family and have a tendency to "tell them their business". There is an old adage that says Cairns must be protected from themselves and this is true. They don't usually start a scrap but neither will they walk away from one.

How the pup is raised and trained, combined with the breed traits and individual temperament, will determine the overall behavior of the adult. Puppy kindergarten classes are highly recommended for early training and socializing.

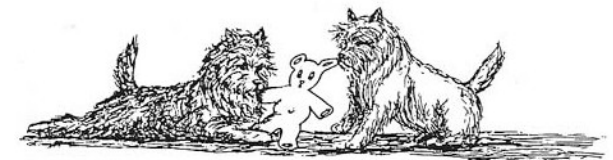
Questions about the Breed?

Do they bark? Yes, they bark. However, they do not usually become yappy unless allowed to do so. Some personalities are noisier than others as in any breed. All the more reason to make a commitment to training your dog. A Cairn is a good watch dog for it will enthusiastically announce visitors to your yard and home.

Do they like children? Oh yes, they generally like children as long as the children are reasonable with the dog. It is expected that parents will train their children how to act responsibly with the dog and that the dog is also taught manners in dealing with people.

How long do they live? Cairns can be expected to live up to 18 years old. The majority live until 12-14 years so it is a long-term commitment should you decide to choose this breed as a companion. Cairns are generally healthy dogs but like other breeds and mongrels are prone to some genetic problems. Please feel free to ask a breeder about health, genetic history.

What about grooming? Cairns, like many terriers, must have the dead coat pulled or stripped out. It is not hard to do and the breeder should be happy to show you how to do it. Keeping a Cairn's ears, feet and tail trimmed goes a long way to making the dog look good. A Cairn can be clipped but it will ruin the hard, weather resistant coat that is so versatile. A Cairn should not be bathed very often. Once a year is plenty as the Cairn does not have an oily coat. Bathing too often causes skin problems in this breed. A wash cloth for cleaning faces, tummies and feet is advised when the dog gets exceptionally dirty. A wet and dirty Cairn, if allowed to dry in his crate, only needs brushing for all the dirt to fall off him if he has the correct coat.



Suggests When Looking for a Cairn pup or adult:

1. *Should you leave a message for the breeder to phone you and you haven't heard back in a reasonable length of time, please phone again. Many of us are very busy and do our best to return calls. Often we are gone for several days participating on dog shows. We also take the view that if you phone back you are sincere about your inquiry.*
2. *Arrange to visit the breeder and see the adult dogs. If you are doing a breed research to find the right dog for you, looking at the adults will show you what you will be living with. Pups are cute but they grow up. Expect to take the whole family, the breeder want to see everyone too.*
3. *Do not be offended if the breeder puts you through a bit of an inquisition. A caring breeder wants what is best for the dog and not everyone is a perfect match for a Cairn. Time and effort have been spent on the pups and the breeder is particular as to where they will be placed. They may request a referral from a vet or ask to come and visit your home.*
4. *Ask about written health guarantees. Most breeders offer them and cover genetic problems that would prevent a reasonable lifespan and quality of life for the dog. Do ask about problems in the breed. All dogs have genetic problems whether they are purebred or mixed. Most breeders sell their dogs on a spay/neuter contract and many use the Canadian Kennel Club Non-Breeding Agreement.*
5. *By federal law you are entitled to the registration papers of a dog sold as a purebred at no extra cost to you provided you have paid in full for the dog. Do not leave the breeders premises with a pup that is not micro chipped or tattooed. A three-generation pedigree showing the parents registration numbers must also be provided.*

Cairn Terrier Club of Canada

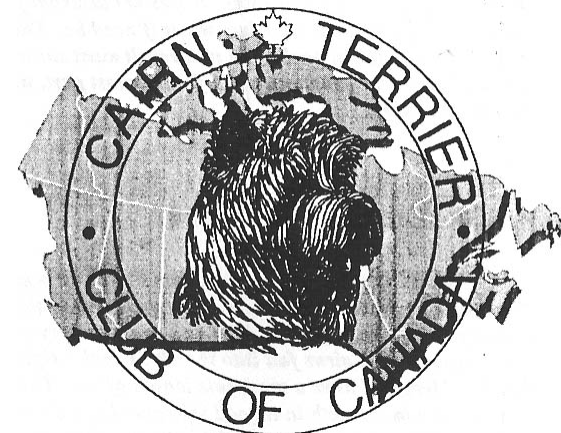
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Please visit the Cairn Terrier Club of Canada Breeders for availability of pups or adult dogs.

www.cairnterrierclub.ca/breeders



The Cairn Terrier Club of Canada



Hello Everyone!
I am a Cairn Terrier

Please turn the page to learn more about me....