

An Introduction to the Airedale Terrier



*The
Airedale Terrier Club of America
congratulates you on your
new Airedale Terrier, the
King of Terriers!*

The Airedale Terrier is the largest and hardiest of all the terriers and, as an all-round useful dog, has no superior.

The Airedale Terrier Club of America wants to help you enjoy your new Airedale Terrier by giving you some basic information about the Airedale.

History of the Airedale Terrier

It is generally conceded that the Airedale had its origin in the valley of the Aire in England. The now extinct old English Terrier had the nerve and fire for dry land hunting, but was lacking the “nose” and too, did not have a coat that was water repellent enough for water work. A cross between this terrier and the Otterhound was the solution to the problem of obtaining a satisfactory all-purpose dog. These ancestors of our present day Airedales were far from them in appearance and were not even called Airedales but first they were known as Waterside Terriers, then as Bingley Terriers.

It was in 1879 that classes for Airedale Terriers, as such, were provided at shows. One important definition came to the Airedale Terrier here in the USA. The Airedale Terrier became known as the original “3 in 1 dog.” This means that they could hunt feathers, retrieve waterfowl & track/tree fur of any type. With these additions to the definition of the Airedale Terrier we now own a dog who can “do it all.”

Appearance and Characteristics

The Airedale Terrier is a medium-sized dog; AKC Breed Standard states that dogs should measure approximately 23 inches in height at the shoulder, with bitches slightly less. Both sexes should be sturdy, well muscled and boned. The outer coat should be hard, dense and wiry and should have a shorter growth of softer hair underneath

called the undercoat. Movement is the crucial test of conformation. . . it should be free and the legs should be placed so as to give a strong well-balanced stance. The toes should be turned neither in nor out. The Airedale is not quarrelsome, but if attacked, can master any other dog his own weight and usually more.

Daily Care

The Airedale Terrier requires a well balanced diet with a yearly veterinary visit. Your Vet provides yearly vaccinations and helps you decide what diet your Airedale Terrier needs to maintain its solid outline.

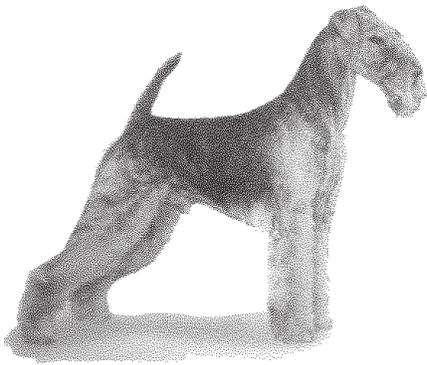
Exercise is of vital importance to help maintain your Airedale Terrier’s health. A brisk walk in the morning and evening will help him burn those unwanted calories. Playing frisbee, flyball or working agility courses will keep both you & your Airedale Terrier ready for whatever game comes your way.

Your Airedale Terrier’s coat is relatively easy to maintain. Quarterly visits to a quality grooming salon along with regular twice-weekly brushing and/or combing will keep your Airedale Terrier looking as majestic as he/she should. If you desire to keep your Airedale Terrier in a “show” coat, ask your dog’s breeder or contact your local Airedale Terrier Club for information on how to “strip” your Airedale’s coat.

Training

Airedale Terriers are eager to learn, and remember their lessons well. The trick is to stay on your toes and know what you are about to ask your Airedale Terrier. Many times the Airedale Terrier will learn a task on the first or second try only to be bored when asked to do the same task repetitiously.

In whatever venue you choose to train your Airedale Terrier—conformation, hunting/working, obedience, agility or search & rescue—the trainer must remain calm, in control & keep a positive outlook. Positive reinforcement training will give you an Airedale Terrier who is not only anxious to learn but ready to meet whatever challenge you place before him.



Puppy Kindergarten classes are a must in the beginning steps of socialization. Your dog is extremely adaptable and, through keen intelligence, can be taught to do any of the jobs for which other breeds are known.

Spay/Neuter

The Airedale Terrier Club of America strongly recommends that you spay or neuter your pet Airedale. Most responsible breeders require this by selling their pets with spay/neuter contracts.

There are several important reasons for this recommendation: (a) Altered animals are normally healthier and usually live longer than unaltered animals. Spaying a female before the first season greatly reduces the risk of mammary tumors and eliminates the dangers of uterine infections. Neutering a male removes the possibility of testicular cancer and lowers the risk of developing prostate problems; (b) The breeding of dogs is a serious responsibility and should be undertaken only by those who seek to improve the breed; it should never be done to make a profit; (c) The basic disposition of your Airedale will not be changed by spaying or neutering. The AKC permits dogs that have been altered to participate in all phases of Obedience, Tracking, Rally and Agility competitions.

Conclusions

Finally, if the day should come when you can no longer keep your Airedale (for whatever reason: divorce, moving, allergies, etc.), what should you do? The ATCA urges that you NEVER take your pet to an animal shelter. You should first contact your breeder for help in re-homing your dog. If that is not successful, contact Airedale Breed Rescue.

Sometimes, your local Humane Society knows the Breed rescue contact in your area. If not, contact The Airedale Terrier Club of America Rescue and Adoption Chair at the www.airedale.org Web site, your local or regional Airedale Terrier Club, or the AKC.

Further Information

The ATCA, founded in 1900, is the parent club of the breed in the United States and is the official spokes-organization for the breed with the American Kennel Club. The Club's objectives are to encourage and promote quality in the breeding of purebred Airedale Terriers, to urge members and breeders to accept the standard of the breed as approved by the AKC as the only standard of excellence and, lastly, to educate judges about the standard of the breed.

If you would like further information about the Airedale Terrier, the ATCA maintains a very informative Web site at www.airedale.org. The ATCA Web site Shopping at www.shopping.airedale.org/ has many educational pamphlets and books available, including various products on grooming. An application for ATCA membership is available on the ATCA Website.

Good luck with your new Airedale Terrier and may you enjoy your pet for many years to come.

Recommended Reading

The New Complete Airedale Terrier, by June Dutcher and Janet Johnson Framke. Covers all aspects of Airedale Terrier ownership and history.

Your Airedale, Strebeigh & McCready. Covers puppies, grooming health personality breeding and whelping.

Facts About the Airedale Terrier;
Available from the ATCA.

The Official Standard Discussed and Clarified, Available from ATCA; with discussion and clarification of some of the finer points of the standard.

Airedale Terriers; Miner; Complete Pet Owner's Manual; answers questions about feeding, health, grooming, training & more.

Working Airedale Terrier; Cummins; Covers history, versatility & adaptability of the Airedale Terrier.

