

Congratulations

On Your New Belgian Tervuren!

Welcome to the wonderful world of the Belgian Tervuren. The American Belgian Tervuren Club (ABTC) is the guardian of the breed. As such, we are pleased to offer you some historical facts and direct you in finding additional information about this marvelous breed.



History

In the late 19th century in Belgium, a group of distinct herding dogs were developed that became known as the Belgian Shepherds. Varying by coat color and texture, the dogs took their names from the towns where they originated: the long-coated fawn and black Tervuren, the long-coated black Groenendael, the short-coated Malinois and the wire-coated Laekenois. In 1959, the American Kennel Club recognized the Belgian Tervuren as a separate breed.

At the heart of the success of the Belgian Tervuren are the breed fanciers, the dedicated enthusiasts who show dogs, train obedience and agility dogs, work herding dogs and love their family pet, perhaps all with the same dog. They value the breed for its beauty, intelligence and versatility, virtues that inspired the ABTC motto many years ago: “A well-balanced Tervuren has a CH (Championship) on one end and a UDT (Utility Dog Tracker) on the other.”

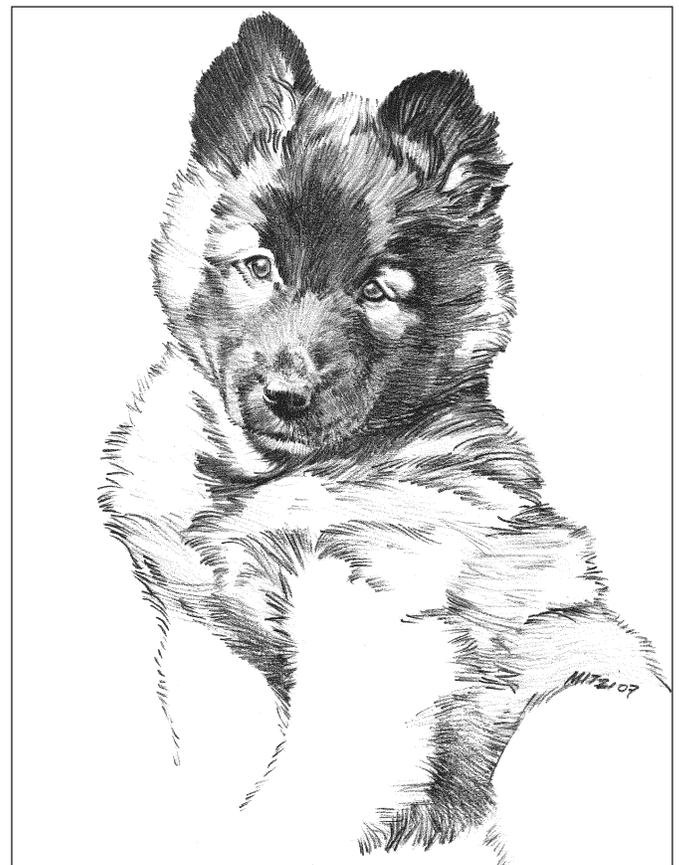
Physical Description

Physically striking, the ideal Belgian Tervuren is an elegant medium-sized dog, perfectly balanced, standing

squarely on all four feet, its dark eyes focused and alert in a black masked face. Its coat is a base color ranging from warm fawn to fiery mahogany overlaid with a veil of black. The head is elegant and long with small- to medium-sized high-set erect ears. In all aspects of its structure the Tervuren is moderate; no feature of the dog should appear excessive. A herding dog, the Tervuren should move with a light, reaching gait that appears effortless.

Talents and Temperament

Agile, energetic, extremely intelligent and responsive, Tervuren (Tervs) have the precision, discipline and animation to perform an extraordinary array of tasks. They are assistance dogs for the disabled, police dogs or search and rescue dogs, sentries and couriers in wartime, and the superb shepherds they were bred to be. Today in lighter pursuits they are top contenders in every agility and obedience trial. Their enthusiasm carries them into any sport from dog sledding to tracking to frisbee.



Highly individualistic, one dog may be lively with a distinct sense of humor, another mellow and serious, but some characteristics are common to the breed. Tervuren are intensely alert to changes in people and the environment but while sensitive, no dog should be fearful or aggressive. They are possessive of their owners, demanding of attention, happy, loyal and love to be taught. Watchful, most Tervs are suspicious of strangers until told by their owners to accept the new person. These qualities make them ideal companions and family guardians. With proper puppy socialization and training, Tervs can be a joy to live with.

Training

Start training your puppy as soon as you bring him home. The whole stage for your puppy's lifelong learning habits and obedient attitude are being set in your own home when the puppy is young. While formal obedience training will later teach your dog to respond to specific commands that will be useful in modern society, early home training is essential so that your puppy learns the rules of your house, about being polite to strangers and being handled and groomed.

Although a young puppy does not require extensive grooming, your puppy should become accustomed to a soft brush, nail clippers or a grinder, and a frequent and thorough examination by you.

The Belgian Tervuren is a herding dog and was initially bred to work. A Tervuren left to his own resources, may invent his own "work," which could mean herding cars, the paperboy or joggers (in essence, making a nuisance of himself). The Tervuren has a great desire to work, and it can be happily channeled by basic training. You may also choose to follow this up with more formal obedience training, when he is old enough.

Genetic Diseases

Genetic disease is not common in Belgian Tervuren, yet a number of serious diseases are found within the breed, the most well known of these being epilepsy, hip and elbow dysplasia, eye health issues (which may include cataracts and other eye diseases) and thyroid problems. Due to modes of inheritance, even healthy dogs may produce heritable health disorders if they are carrying genes for the disorder.

Breeding

Not all dogs should be bred, especially those that have genetic problems, disqualifying faults or poor temperaments. If you are contemplating breeding, you should ensure that your dog or bitch has passed the

recommended health checks (at a minimum, hips, elbows, eyes and thyroid). Breeding is a lifetime commitment, whether you are the breeder of record or stud dog owner. You should be prepared to take back or assist in relocation, any and all puppies that you produce.

American Belgian Tervuren Club, Inc.

The American Belgian Tervuren Club is the parent club for the Belgian Tervuren breed in the United States and is a member of the AKC. The ABTC welcomes into its membership any person wishing to promote the aims of the club. The Club promotes responsible dog ownership, careful breeding of sound, temperamentally balanced Belgian Tervuren, ethical practices in all dog-related activities and encourages use of the Tervuren as the versatile working companion that it is.

The club's official magazine, *Tervuren News Tales*, offers regional and national news, monthly columns, educational articles and photographs of dogs from around the country.

The ABTC sponsors a large national specialty show annually, and regional clubs around the country hold their own specialty and supported entry shows. The ABTC Web site, www.abtc.org, provides information about the ABTC, membership process, regional clubs, events, education, rescue and more.

Along with your breeder, the ABTC and its membership are valuable sources of information on all things to do with the Belgian Tervuren. Making good use of all these resources ensures that you will better understand and thoroughly enjoy your Belgian Tervuren.

