

Congratulations on Your New Cocker Spaniel

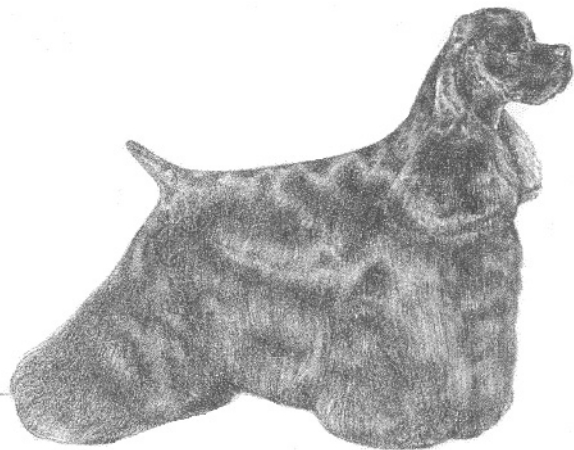


An Introduction to the Cocker

Congratulations! You are now the proud owner of one of the most beautiful and versatile breeds. The Cocker's most notable characteristic is that, above all, he is merry and affectionate. This is a dog for the whole family.

History

As far back as 1368 we find mention of the **Spanyell**, which came to be divided into two groups, the land spaniel and the water spaniel. A further division separated the land spaniels on the basis of size, when the "Cockers" and the very small or toy spaniels were separated from the larger spaniels. Then, as the Cockers and the toys were used for markedly different purposes, these two were once more divided. The toys eventually became the English Toy Spaniels, which were maintained principally as pets, while the Cockers retained their earlier classification as sporting dogs. This is why the Cocker is called the smallest member of the sporting-dog family.



Beauty and Brains

The Cocker in modern times has become a wonderful family dog. His lovely head and soulful eyes are appealing to all. Yet his inherent desire to hunt, which was his original purpose, makes him a capa-

ble gun dog when properly trained. He is a natural showoff, and many Cockers excel in conformation, obedience and agility activities.

The Cocker is a lot in a small package with the ideal size up to 15" in height for males and 14" for females. He has a sturdy compact body and a cleanly chiseled and refined head, with the overall dog in complete balance. He has a slightly sloping topline and is capable of considerable speed combined with great endurance. There are three varieties within the breed. There are Blacks to include Black/Tans, ASCOBS (any solid color other than black to include Liver/Tans) and Parti-Colors to include Tri-Colors. In the Black/Tan coloration, the tan may range from the lightest of cream to the darkest of red.

Care of Your Cocker

Grooming is important in keeping your Cocker looking and feeling his best. Daily brushing is a big help in keeping the coat free of tangles and mats. It is a good idea to have your dog trimmed every six weeks. Weekly baths will help keep him sweet smelling and his coat in good condition. You can learn to take care of the coat entirely at home or you can combine home care with professional grooming.

Your dog needs proper exercise. A daily long walk on a leash should meet his needs. Never allow your dog to run loose. While he is learning to be a responsible member of your household, especially while still a puppy, a crate is advisable.

Feed your Cocker a good quality dog food. You may wish to mix in a small amount of canned food to give an extra something to its taste.

Make sure you check with your veterinarian about his shots and general health!

Identification

Protect your Cocker Spaniel in case he is lost. You should identify your Cocker with a collar and tags. A permanent identification with a microchip or tattoo can be registered with AKC's Companion Animal Recovery. A 24-hour toll-free hotline helps locate the owners. There is a 100% re-homing rate with enrolled animals. For information, call 800-252-7894.



Should I Breed My Cocker?

In today's world we have an overpopulation of dogs. Breeding just to have a litter is not recommended. For the majority of pet owners, spaying your female is to be preferred. This operation will also lessen the risk in later life of mammary tumors and other reproductive problems. The male may also benefit from being neutered and this procedure will cool his desire for any neighborhood female in heat. Please check with your veterinarian for when and how these procedures should be done.

Canine Health Foundation

Many American Spaniel Club members support health research for the Cocker Spaniel through the AKC Canine Health Foundation—a nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to help dogs live longer, healthier lives. Supporting the Canine Health Foundation will help ensure a healthy future for all dogs. For more information about ongoing health research to help Cocker Spaniels, see www.akcchf.org or call toll free 888-682-9696.

The American Spaniel Club

This is the national parent club dedicated to the well being of the breed. The club is also responsible for the written breed standard — a description of the ideal Cocker. The American Spaniel Club is actually older than the American Kennel Club. There are many local branches of the club throughout the United States. For more information about the standard and local clubs, contact:

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American Spaniel Club Web Site

<http://www.asc-cockerspaniel.org>

Recommended Reading

The American Cocker Spaniel

Dr. Alvin Grossman

Doral Publishing, Inc.

The World of the Cocker Spaniel

Bill Gorodner & Lloyd Alton

T.F.H. Publishing

The Complete American Cocker Spaniel

Norman Austin & Jean Austin

Hungry Minds, Inc.

A New Owner's Guide to Cocker Spaniels

Judy Iby

TFH Publications

