

# Your life with a Flat-Coated Retriever



*You have decided to share your life with a Flat-Coated Retriever. Congratulations! What a great choice!*

## General Appearance



Photo by Chris Butler

The Flat-Coated Retriever is a versatile family companion-hunting retriever with a happy and active demeanor, intelligent expression, and clean lines. The Flat-Coat has been traditionally described as showing “power without lumber and raciness without weediness.” The

distinctive and most important features of the Flat-Coat are the silhouette (both moving and standing), smooth effortless movement, head type, coat and character. In silhouette the Flat-Coat has a long, strong, clean, “one piece” head, which is unique to the breed. A level topline combined with a deep, long rib cage tapering to a moderate tuck-up create the impression of a blunted triangle. This utilitarian retriever is well balanced, strong, but elegant; never cobby, short legged or rangy. The coat is thick and flat lying, and the legs and tail are well feathered. A proud carriage, responsive attitude, waving tail and overall look of functional strength, quality, style and symmetry complete the picture of the typical Flat-Coat. Solid Black and Solid Liver are the two acceptable colors of the Flat-Coated Retriever.

## Temperament

Character is a primary and outstanding asset of the Flat-Coat. He is a responsive, loving member of the family, a versatile working dog, multi-talented, sensible, bright and tractable. In training and competition, the Flat-Coat demonstrates stability, and a desire to please with a confident, happy and outgoing attitude characterized by a wagging tail. Nervous, hyperactive, apathetic, shy or obstinate behavior is undesirable. *Severe Fault* – unprovoked aggressive behavior toward people or animals is totally unacceptable.

## History

Flat-Coated Retrievers emerged as a distinct breed in the middle to late 19th century. Developed in Great Britain as a dual-purpose dog, early breeders of Flat-Coats strove to breed a dog of pleasing conformation and ability in the field. These remain the objectives that survive today among virtually all Flat-Coat breeders. Largely because of very careful breeding and placement of puppies, Flat-Coat breeders have maintained

the characteristics of a dual-purpose dog equally at home in the field and the show ring, and concurrently an exuberant and loyal family companion. These are the characteristics that have endeared the breed to its owners and breeders. There are several excellent sources for additional information on the history of the breed. Among them are Joan Mason’s book *The Flat-Coated Retriever Today* (Howell Book House, New York, 1996), and Brenda Phillip’s book *Flat-Coated Retrievers* (Kingdom Books, Waterlooville, England, 1996).



The Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America (FCRSA) is the AKC’s official national parent club for purebred Flat-Coated Retrievers. For more information about the objectives of the FCRSA you can visit our website at [www.FCRSAinc.org](http://www.FCRSAinc.org). For more information about purebred dogs, refer to the AKC website, [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).



Photo by Wendy Tisdall

## Flat-Coated Retriever Activities

Besides being an excellent family companion, you and your Flat-Coat can participate in many fun and exciting activities. The FCRSA has a strong commitment to maintaining the dual-purpose nature of the breed. Flat-Coated Retrievers have enjoyed success not only in the Society's Working Certificate/Working Certificate Excellent programs, but also in AKC Hunt Tests, Field Trials, and in upland fields and duck blinds as personal family hunting companions.

Flat-Coated Retrievers excel in activities such as Conformation, Obedience, Agility and Tracking. Once a year, the FCRSA hosts a National Specialty at varying locations around the country, where a variety of Conformation, Performance, Educational and Social events are held. It is a great opportunity to meet with Flat-Coated Retrievers and their owners from all over the world. Visit [www.FCRSAinc.org](http://www.FCRSAinc.org) to find out about upcoming National Specialties.

Photo by Chris Butler



Photo by Chris Butler



Photo by Mike Leahy



## Healthcare

Flat-Coated Retrievers have a low incidence of inheritable diseases that affect function. They are generally sound in structure and generally free from significant eye defects. Nonetheless, owners are encouraged to have structural exams done for hips, elbows and patellas, and CERF eye exams. This will help give you peace of mind about the health of your canine family member, as well as provide the breeder with valuable information to assist them in making sound breeding decisions to protect the health of the breed. Like many other breeds, Flat-Coated Retrievers have significant issues with several types of cancer. Through funding by the Flat-Coated Retriever Foundation, important research is ongoing to try to identify causes, and eventually cures for these diseases. More information about research being funded by the FCRSA can be found at [www.FCRSAinc.org](http://www.FCRSAinc.org).

This is part of a larger effort as many FCRSA members support health research for our breed 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 helps ensure a healthy future for all dogs. For more information about ongoing health research to help our breed, see [www.akcchf.org](http://www.akcchf.org) or call toll free 1-888-682-9696.



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*We hope you and your new pup enjoy many happy times together!*

## Other Important Information

For dogs that will not be participating in Conformation, spaying and neutering is recommended for the health benefits this provides. Spayed/Neutered dogs may compete in all AKC events except for Conformation.

If you are considering breeding your Flat-Coated Retriever, please seek out an experienced Flat-Coat breeder to help mentor and guide you through the process of setting up a breeding program that will improve and preserve the conformation and working abilities of the Flat-Coated Retriever. A responsible breeder exercises great care in the placement of puppies and makes a life-long commitment to the well-being of the Flat-Coated Retrievers they produce.

Permanent identification of your Flat-Coated Retriever is strongly recommended. There is a "Lost & Found" option available with AKC Registration through the AKC Companion Animal Recovery Corporation (CAR) program. This offer includes a free dog tag with recovery information and the AKC CAR 24/7 phone number. Further protection can be added by microchipping the dog and registering the microchip with CAR. For more information, see [www.akccar.org](http://www.akccar.org) or 1-800-252-7894.

Breed related educational materials are published by the FCRSA, offered free or sold for a nominal fee. You can obtain a copy of the Illustrated Breed Standard, information on the FCRSA Foundation and copies of FCRSA Newsletters through our website at [www.FCRSAinc.org](http://www.FCRSAinc.org). You will also find many articles and information on living with and loving the Flat-Coated Retriever.

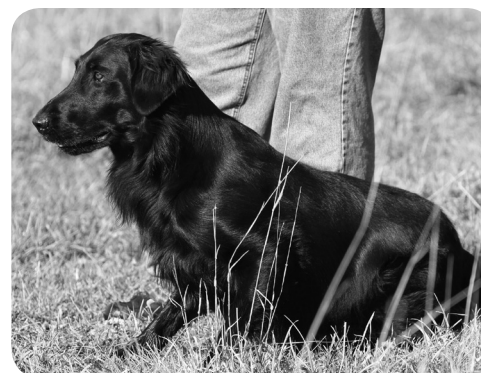


Photo by Karen Booth and Genevieve Dever