

2- Beagles



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Breed Profile

The beagle is a compact little rabbit hunter, one of the smallest members of the [hound group](#) that relies on scent to find his quarry. Though the precise origin of the beagle is unknown, the breed seems to have been a favorite human companion and vigorous rabbit hunter for centuries. Since the 1950s, the beagle has consistently ranked as one of the top 10 most loved breeds in the United States.

The beagle was one of the top 10 breeds for the year 2007.

History and Origin

Though, extensively researched, the origins of the beagle can only be traced back to the mid-19th century, though a beagle-like hound was used to hunt rabbits in the 14th century. The origin of the name "beagle" is likewise obscured by history; some believe the word comes from the Old English word "begele," or the Celtic "beag," both of which mean small. Despite a limited recorded history, it is generally believed that the beagle is one of the oldest breeds and is one of the breeds closest in appearance to the original hounds.

The breed was developed in the British Isles. Besides being favored as a rabbit hunter, the beagle was a favorite breed of Queen Elizabeth. It belongs to a group of hunting dogs known as scent hounds, which use scent to search and find their prey.

The beagle was officially recognized by the British Kennel Club in 1873 and brought to the United States. The National Beagle Club was formed in 1888. The [American Kennel Club](#) recognizes the beagle as a member of the hound group.

Unfortunately, because of their compact size and friendly temperament, the beagle has been one of the most popular dog breeds to be used in medical research.

Appearance and Size

Beagles are small shorthaired hounds with long ears that lie against the head. The coat colors are a combination of tan, black and white. As with most hounds, the eyes of the beagle are soft and pleading.

The adult beagle is a [small breed](#) and, in the United States, is divided into two size categories, 13

to 15 inches at the shoulder and under 13 inches at the shoulder. In England, there is only one class, with a maximum height of 16 inches. Beagles average between 18 to 30 pounds.

Personality

Friendly and lovable, the beagle's tail is perpetually wagging. The breed is not aggressive but, with his baying [bark](#), will alert the homeowner of intruders. They are intelligent, good-natured and docile companions.

Home and Family Relations

Beagles are excellent choices for families with children. The breed's easy going nature makes them tolerant family members that love to participate in games. Beagles do not enjoy being left alone for extended periods of time. They can easily become frustrated and bored, leading to behavior problems, including [destructive behavior](#).

Training

In general, the breed does well in obedience training but some find the beagle somewhat stubborn. Some have trouble with [housebreaking](#).

Grooming

Due to their short hair coat, beagles do not require special grooming.

Special Care

Beagles love to hunt. This results in a strong desire to [dig](#), which can be problematic for some homeowners and gardeners. Some beagles tend to be quite vocal and, if not given appropriate home care, may excessively bark. On the plus side, they don't drool, shed little and they have minimal doggy odor.

Since beagles thoroughly enjoy hunting and digging, providing a safe and adequate confinement may be difficult. For some persistent dogs, special fencing may be required.

Breed Profile

Common Diseases and Disorders

- [Dermatitis](#) is a general term used to describe inflammation of the skin and can be caused by allergies, infections or even parasites such as mange.
- [Epilepsy](#) is a disorder that results in seizure activities.
- [Intervertebral disk disease](#) is a painful condition that can develop when the disk material between the vertebra of the spine moves out of place. The disk material extrudes into the spinal canal and can impinge on the spinal cord, resulting in pain, difficulty walking or even paralysis.
- [Diabetes Mellitus](#) is a disease of the pancreas related to insufficient amounts of insulin production.
- [Chronic hepatitis](#) is a chronic and progressive inflammation of the liver of dogs that leads eventually to the replacement of normal liver tissue with scar tissue.

Lymphosarcoma (lymphoma) is a malignant cancer that involves the lymphoid system.

In addition, although these occur infrequently, the following disorders have also been reported:

Cataracts are opacities within the lens of the eye that affect vision.

Amyloidosis is a disease involving abnormal deposits of starch-type material throughout the body. A primary target is the kidney.

Glaucoma is a disease of the eye that develops when the pressure within the eye increases. There is a high risk of permanent blindness associated with glaucoma.

Deafness can be present at birth or develop later in life.

Prolapse of the third eyelid also known as cherry eye, is not painful and occurs spontaneously.

Lymphocytic Thyroiditis – a condition causing **Hypothyroidism** results when the thyroid gland does not function adequately. Without enough thyroid hormone, illness can occur.

Hyperadrenocorticism is a disorder affecting the adrenal glands. When overactive, the adrenal glands secrete excessive cortisol, resulting in illness.

Developmental kidney disease - can result in kidney failure early in life.

Congenital Hypotrichosis - is a congenital problem causing symmetrical hair loss.

Mast Cell Tumors are malignant tumors that can occur in the skin or within the body.

Lens luxation is a dislocation or displacement of the lens within the eye.

Life Span

The average life span of the beagle ranges between 12 to 15 years.
