

## 7- Miniature Schnauzers



The miniature schnauzer belongs to the terrier group of the American Kennel Club.

### Breed Profile

For many people, the schnauzer is considered the perfect family pet. Available in three different sizes, the schnauzer is a tough and hardy companion as well as protector. With their classic beard and long eyebrows, this breed is easily recognizable all over the world.

The miniature schnauzer was one of the top 20 breeds for the year 2007.

### History and Origin

The schnauzer hails from Germany and is divided into the miniature schnauzer, [standard schnauzer](#) and [giant schnauzer](#). Of the three sizes of schnauzer, the standard is considered the prototype and is the oldest. Even though these schnauzers may appear similar, they are all considered separate breeds.

All schnauzers are thought to have developed in the kingdoms of Wurttemberg and Bavaria, and the standard schnauzer has been around since at least 1492. Paintings of that era depict the schnauzer as a household companion. The dog was not only part of the family but was also used to chase rats and guard produce carts in the marketplace.

The miniature schnauzer is the newest breed and the smallest of the three, it was developed as a companion and pet. It is felt that the mini was developed by crossing the standard schnauzer with affenpinschers and poodles.

Prior to 1910, the schnauzer was not known outside of Germany. After World War I, the breed became popular throughout the world. During the war, the giant schnauzer was used in policing and as a messenger.

Today, the giant schnauzer is used in some parts of the world as a [police](#) and [guard dog](#). The standard and miniature schnauzers are beloved family pets. The miniature schnauzer is listed under the [terrier group](#) of the American Kennel Club.

### Appearance and Size

The schnauzer is a compact sturdy dog. All sizes have a stiff wiry hair coat with arched bristling eyebrows, whiskers and a beard. The most common coat color is salt and pepper but black is also

available. In Germany, black is the more common color.

Most schnauzers in Germany have [cropped ears](#) but in the United States, cropped and uncropped are seen. Uncropped ears sit high on the head and fold forward.

The miniature schnauzer stands 12 to 14 inches at the shoulder and weighs 13 to 15 pounds.

## **Personality**

All schnauzers are intelligent and reliable dogs. They are very protective of their family and make good watchdogs.

## **Home and Family Relations**

The schnauzer is a wonderful [family pet](#) and is quite tolerant of children. They are often wary of strangers and will protect their family by alerting their owners of the presence of intruders.

## **Training**

Schnauzers tend to be independent dogs and do not tolerate harsh training or reprimand. They are easy to train, as long as positive reinforcement techniques are used.

## **Special Concerns**

Schnauzers are intelligent dogs and may become bored easily.

In order to keep their coat clean and tangle free, frequent grooming and clipping is necessary. Trips to the groomer are also necessary to maintain the classic schnauzer facial appearance.

## **Breed Profile**

### **Common Diseases and Disorders**

In general, the miniature schnauzer is a healthy dog with few medical concerns. However, the following diseases or disorders have been reported:

- [Hypothyroidism](#) results when the thyroid gland does not function adequately. Without enough thyroid hormone, illness can occur.
- [Atopy](#) is an itchy skin disease of animals that is caused by an allergy to substances in the environment.
- [Food Allergy](#) affected pets develop skin allergies due to a variety of food ingredients.
- Schnauzer comedo syndrome – believed to be an inherited disorder that causes numerous comedones in the skin of the back of certain schnauzers.
- [Melanoma](#) is a tumor arising from melanocytes, which are the cells that produce pigment.
- [Lipomas](#) are benign fatty tumors of the subcutaneous tissue.
- [Glaucoma](#) is a disease of the eye that develops when the pressure within the eye increases which can lead to blindness.

- [Lens luxation](#) is a dislocation or displacement of the lens within the eye.
- [Progressive retinal degeneration](#) is a disease that causes nerve cells at the back of the eye to degenerate. The condition usually begins in older pets and can lead to blindness.
- [Epilepsy](#) is a seizure disorder that develops between the ages of 2 to 5 years.
- [Cataracts](#) cause a loss of the normal transparency of the lens of the eye. The problem can occur in one or both eyes and can lead to blindness.
- [Cryptorchidism](#) is a condition in which one or both testicles do not descend into the scrotum.
- [Urolithiasis](#) is a condition affecting the urinary tract resulting in the formation of bladder stones.
- [Diabetes](#) is a disease of the pancreas related to insufficient amounts of insulin production.
- [Pancreatitis](#) is an inflammation of the pancreas that results in lack of appetite, vomiting and abdominal pain.

### **Breed Profile**

- [Portosystemic shunt](#) (PSS) is a malformation of the blood flow associated with the liver. The blood is shunted away from the liver, resulting in accumulation of blood toxins and subsequent profound illness.
- [Patent ductus arteriosus](#) (PDA) is a congenital birth defect caused by a blood vessel that normally closes after birth, but remains open resulting in the passage of extra volumes of blood into the lungs.
- Pulmonic stenosis is a disease that includes stenosis of the pulmonic heart valve.
- [Chronic valvular heart disease](#) (VHD) is a condition characterized by degeneration and thickening of the heart valves.
- Sick sinus syndrome is a disease that causes an abnormal heart rhythm.
- Drug reactions to a drug group called "sulphonamides" and specific shampoos can cause skin reactions.
- Cholelithiasis, also known as "gallstones", are crystalline bodies that form in the gallbladder or bile duct.
- Primary idiopathic hyperlipidemia is an inherited disease that causes an elevated concentration of lipids in plasma, caused by decrease activity of an enzyme.
- Intact male dogs may develop [Sertoli Cell Tumors](#).

### **Life Span**

The average life span of the miniature schnauzer is 14 to 16 years.

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