

About the Tibetan Terrier



The Tibetan Terrier Club of America would like to congratulate you on the new addition to your family and wish you many years of joy and Tibetan love.

The TTCA is a national organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of the Tibetan Terrier and would like to share the following information with you.

History

The Tibetan Terrier originally came from the Himalayan country of Tibet, an isolated region north of India. According to legend, the breed was raised primarily by the lamas in monasteries and was kept purebred for over 2,000 years.

These shaggy dogs were known as “the Holy Dogs of Tibet.” They were treasured by the lamas, who kept them as companions, good luck charms, mascots, and watchdogs. There is also evidence that TTs were used to herd as well as to retrieve articles that tumbled down the steep rocky mountains into crevices. The breed is very sure-footed, and they are powerful jumpers—they would be well suited for such tasks. They were never sold but were given as gifts to promote good fortune as a mark of great respect. The Tibetan Terrier is NOT a true terrier.

Characteristics of the Breed

The Tibetan Terrier is a medium sized, shaggy, square dog, measuring 14-17 inches from shoulder to ground and weighing from 18 to 30 pounds. An average sized dog is 15-16 inches in height and weighs 20 to 24 pounds. Surprisingly agile, the Tibetan Terrier is powerful and sure-footed in movement, as capable of surviving in rough terrain here as he was in his native Tibet.

The breed has a double coat. The inner coat is fine, similar to cashmere. The outer coat may be almost straight or wavy. It is neither silky nor curly.

Tibetan Terriers should have a heavy fall of hair over the eyes and face to protect them from the elements. The breed should also have a lovely plumed tail carried over the back. In addition to the breed’s square, compact look, other important characteristics include large, almost flat feet suitable for traction on rough ground, a good rib spring and superb balance. All this is accompanied by strong reach of the front legs and strong drive in the rear.

The color of the Tibetan is merely a matter of choice and accessibility. All colors are equal in the breed, and the range is wide: from pure white to jet black, with goldens, silvers, brindles, fawns, parti-colors and tri-colors. The Tibetan Terrier was never bred for color, since it was considered more important to breed for sturdy good health, loving temperament, and correct type (the “look” of the breed).

Grooming the Tibetan Terrier

Because the Tibetan Terrier has a profuse, often thick, double coat, the breed must be brushed, combed and bathed on a regular basis. If this is done consistently, it can be enjoyable for both dog and owner.

Personality

The temperament of the Tibetan Terrier can be compared to that of an intelligent, loving, slightly mischievous child. Completely devoted to his or her people (or person), the Tibetan becomes a member of the family very quickly. The breed loves to travel and experience new places, preferably with you nearby. Perhaps the chief characteristic of the breed is its sensitivity to the moods and conditions of its owner and/or family. This factor, combined with its innate intelligence and devotion, makes the Tibetan Terrier a remarkable companion for LIFE. Even in old age, there is a delightful childlike quality about the breed that most find endearing. They are merry companions.



You and Your Tibetan Terrier

The Tibetan Terrier Club of America recommends spaying or neutering puppies not destined for the breed ring. Neutering either gender may result in better health in the long term and eliminates medical and behavioral problems associated with the reproductive cycle. We also recommend that you stay in contact with your breeder for guidance and to answer any questions you might have regarding the training and health of your new addition. Keeping your Tibetan active and a part of your life will guarantee a lifetime of devotion and love.

For more information on the breed or to contact the secretary of the TTCA, visit our Web site at www.ttca-online.org.

The Tibetan Terrier Health & Welfare Foundation was founded in 2007 by the TTCA to support and encourage health research and fund the TTCA Rescue Program. Visit the TTHWF at www.tibetanterriersfoundation.org.

Health

The Tibetan is a very hardy breed and is considered long-lived with most living well beyond 12 years and many to 15 or 16 years. Some problems found in the Tibetan Terrier are: hip dysplasia (HD), patella luxation (PL), progressive retinal atrophy (PRA), lens luxation (LL), hypothyroidism, cataracts and canine neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis (CCL/NCL). Some of these problems have been proven to be hereditary, and conscientious breeders have screened their stock and can explain these problems and their incidence. Many breeders will have knowledge of their puppies' bloodlines and potential buyers are advised to ask questions and inquire as to evidence of any testing done on the sire and dam. After all — a healthy and happy puppy is what you are looking for.

Tibetan Terriers in the Ring

The Tibetan Terrier is not only successful in the conformation ring, but also in obedience, agility, flyball rally, and tracking. They can be quite energetic, and the best way to channel that energy is to train. It takes patience and a really good sense of humor to work with a Tibetan. Initially, they were independent workers, and the trait remains, usually surfacing at the most inconvenient time! They are an intelligent breed, wanting to know why they should do what you ask. The Tibetan should come with a label, "Positive Training Methods Required," since the first harsh word will set your training back weeks. If you can laugh at yourself and enjoy a lovely, intelligent, lively companion who, most of the time, will do what you have taught, then by all means, travel the Performance trail with your Tibetan. The well-trained TT brings a unique joy and enthusiasm into the ring rarely seen in other breeds, and they are always crowd pleasers.



Club Publications & TT Items

The Tibetan Terrier Club of America Inc. offers its members and general public a wide range of information pamphlets and Tibetan Terrier related items, at shop.ttca-online.org.

