

Chihuahua (Smooth Coat)



Although the breed's origins are debatable, and probably South American, he may have been originally from China, taking his name from the Mexican state of Chihuahua where first he came to prominence in around 1895. Not long after this he reached El Paso in Texas and it was American dog lovers who refined the breed, seeing it to a high Toy position. The Chihuahua is the smallest breed of dog in the world. Aptly described as cheeky and with a saucy expression, there is no doubt he thinks he is a big dog - and at heart he is. His size makes him easy to take anywhere. He is highly intelligent, easily trained and makes a delightful companion. Elderly people find him an ideal pet, happy to be a much-loved lap dog and also a good house-dog announcing the approach of strangers. However, he is not a suitable pet for small children.

There are two varieties of Chihuahua - the Smooth Coat and the Long Coat. Both the Smooth and the Long Coats have their special attractions, are equally easy to keep clean and well groomed.

What about Health Issues?

You may be aware that some breeds of dog (and crossbreeds too) can be susceptible to inherited disease. Of course you want to be sure that the puppy you choose is as healthy as possible, and you would like to know that it has not inherited any undesirable disease-causing genes from its parents. There is some help in that DNA tests for diseases in purebred dogs are available for some conditions in some breeds, but there are not very many such tests just yet! There are also, however, a number of clinical veterinary screening schemes that dog breeders can use to increase the probability of producing healthy puppies.

Details of the various screening schemes, both veterinary and DNA, that are available to breeders in the UK can be found on the Kennel Club's website at:

www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth

Puppy buyers should be aware that, at present, the application of various health screening results to breeding programmes is not always straightforward, and breeders may make choices for various reasons. A responsible breeder though, will always be willing to discuss relevant health issues with you. Breed clubs are often useful sources of breed-specific information.

And what health screening is relevant for the Chihuahua (Smooth Coat)?

There are not currently any veterinary screening schemes or DNA tests for disease relevant to this breed under the Accredited Breeder Scheme, however you should still ask breeders and refer to breed clubs about health issues in the breed.