

Airedale: Tallest of the Terriers

History and origin

Developed by crossing old English black and tan terrier with Otterhound bloodlines, the Airedale was first used in 19th century England for big game hunting, vermin killing, and police and military work. The breed is named after the valley of Aire in Yorkshire.

Description

The tallest of the terriers, the Airedale stands 22 to 23 inches at the shoulder and weighing between 50 and 60 pounds. He has a strong, muscular, sturdy body and a wiry, non-shedding coat that requires daily grooming with a stiff brush and periodic clipping. Show dogs, however, need hand-stripping, a process that involves pulling dead hair out by hand to preserve the luster and hard texture of the coat. Color is normally black-and-tan, with some red and, less often, white markings.

About the breed

This beautiful, strong, athletic breed exhibits all the tenacity and determination of a terrier, only in a larger package. The Airedale is stubborn and is often difficult to train. He learns slowly, so do not expect one to pick up on things as quickly as a German Shepherd or a Border Collie. The Airedale is active, sometimes flighty, and often sensitive to the demands of training. If an Airedale resists learning a certain command, the last thing you should do is get firmer with the dog. His resistance will only increase and could accelerate into panic. He should not be spoiled, either; a concise, incremental training technique needs to be implemented from puppy hood.

Though affectionate with his owners, the Airedale tends to be suspicious of strangers and can show aggression toward people and dogs. He makes a great watchdog because of his territorial instinct. The Airedale cannot always discriminate between a friend and a stranger, however, and he may give your friends and your children's friends a hard time. This breed is not recommended for families with young children. Early obedience training and lots of socialization with people and other dogs from an early age is mandatory.

Feeding

Recommended feeding for the Airedale is at least 1-1 1/2 cans (13.3oz) of high-quality dog food or the fresh meat equivalent everyday with biscuit added.

Ideal home

A house with a fenced yard is essential for this breed. The owner of an Airedale should be a strong, confident leader who combines firm discipline with patience and precision. Persons considering this breed should desire a dog that has an active, tenacious temperament and is reserved with strangers. Nervous persons will create a pushy, obnoxious dog that lacks confidence. Overbearing types may bring out fear-aggressive behavior. The Airedale needs daily exercise and makes a good jogging partner because of his athletic physique. If left alone for long periods, he might become destructive and noisy. This breed has a high prey drive, so be careful around small animals. He may not tolerate the hectic, unpredictable behavior of young children. Older children are okay, provided they can gain the animal's respect by working him in obedience. The elderly and the disabled may have trouble controlling this energetic, driven breed.

About the Author

Source: <http://101dogbreeds.com>