

DACHSHUNDS

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There are three varieties of Dachshund, Smooth haired, Long haired and Wire haired, and two sizes Standard and Miniature. In FCI countries they are known as Teckels and the type is somewhat different.

Early History of the Dachshund

GERMAN AND ENGLISH FORERUNNERS

Short-legged and long-bodied hounds of the Dachshund type were recorded in carvings in Egyptian monuments of the 15th century, BC, and there is evidence that Englishmen as well as Germans and Italians had a similar breed, used in hunting during the 15th and 16th centuries, but it was in Germany that the breed was standardised in its modern conformation, where it was used to enter badger dens because of its short, powerful legs and long body.

Nowadays the breed is only occasionally used for hunting.

The gay little Dachshund has come to be regarded as a symbol of German "caninity", but it has long been recognised that he was to be found all over Europe at an early date. Old French prints show dogs which are easily recognized as dachshunds, but whereas in France this breed was developed into the equally popular basset, in Germany it was exaggerated into the "teckel", or, as we know him, the dachshund. Most of these early dogs were

bred with an extremely crooked front (forelegs) amounting, by present day standards, almost to a deformity.

A German book on hunting, published in 1719, however, contains two pictures of dogs which very much resemble modern-day dachshunds, and in 1879 the first German Stud Book of Dachshunds was formed, listing the dogs and their breeders. Our modern day show-dogs trace directly back to these!

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Germans were holding dogs shows as well as hunting matches, and the dachshund was being developed in a greatly improved form - it is interesting to note that these dachshunds were very much smaller than today's; even now, on the Continent, the smaller types are preferred.

THE DACHSHUND COMES TO ENGLAND

Dachshunds came to England around 1860, and prizes were first awarded for the breed at a dog show held at the Crystal Palace in 1875. Both Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales were keen Dachshund fanciers, and this Royal patronage helped the breed tremendously.

In 1877 the Kennel Club in England divided the Dachshunds exhibited into groups according to weight, and in 1878 another innovation occurred - division by colour! However, the breed was given its first real organisation in 1881, when the Dachshund Club was formed; aided by Royal favour, the Dachshund had really arrived!

Miniature Dachshunds were introduced into England from Germany in 1928, and it is interesting to

note that Mrs Howard, one of the original importers, was still breeding in 1964. One of the early bitches imported had a litter in quarantine, and a dog from this, Kleinkurio, is at the back of most of our Miniature pedigrees today. The Miniature Dachshund Club of England was formed in 1935. Early importations were in many cases unattractive; pop-eyed, short in ear and lacking in bone. But with the judicious use of small Standards, English breeder evolved the lovely Miniatures of today.

ENGLISH AND GERMAN TYPES DIFFER

The original standard of points was drawn up by the Dachshund Club of England in 1881. Since there was no parallel club in Germany, fanciers in the two countries continued to breed their own type, until the English dogs had become almost completely contrasted to the original German specimens.

The three breeds, short-haired, long-haired and wire-haired, are found throughout the world, the short-haired being the most popular.

Dachshunds may not hunt badgers today, but they have taken up a new occupation - acting. They could be classed as the "Clowns of the Dog World." Mischievous, determined, lovable and very affectionate, they are ideal house pets.

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