

Havanese

Group: Toy
Size: small
Lifespan: 12-14 years
Exercise: moderate
Grooming: very high
Trainability: easy
Watchdog ability: high
Protection ability: very low
Area of Origin: Cuba
Date of Origin: ancient times
Other Names: Bichon Havanais, Havana Silk Dog
Original Function: lapdog, performer

History

The Havanese is one of the Barbichon (later shortened to Bichon) family of small dogs originating in the Mediterranean in ancient times. Spanish traders brought some of these dogs with them as gifts for Cuban women, allowing them to establish trading relationships. In Cuba, the little dogs were pampered as the special pets of the wealthy. They became known as Habeneros, and eventually some found their way back to Europe, where the breed was called the "white Cuban." They became quite popular, not only as pets of the elite but also as performing dogs. Their popularity as pets waned, however, and their stronghold remained in the circus, where they performed throughout Europe as trick dogs. Eventually the breed declined in numbers to such an extent that it was almost extinct not only in Europe but also in its native Cuba. A few remained in Cuba, however, and three families with their Havanese left Cuba for the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. Most present-day Havanese descends from these dogs.

Temperament

The Havanese is gentle and responsive and enjoys pleasing people. They become very attached to their families. Havanese are social and cheerful and get along with everyone including dogs, cats and other pets. This breed is very affectionate and intelligent and learns well.

Upkeep

Although energetic, the Havanese can have its exercise needs met with a short walk or a good play session. It is not a dog that can live outside. Coat care entails brushing two to four times a week. This is a non-shedding dog, which means that loose hairs are caught in the outer hairs, tending to tangle, unless they are combed out.

Official Breed Standard

Please Note:

Words placed in normal brackets (.....) are as in the standard. Words placed in square brackets [.....] are explanations or alternative translations

Brief Historical Summary:

The breed comes from the Western Mediterranean region and developed along the Spanish and Italian coastal regions. It would seem that these dogs were imported early into Cuba by ocean navigating Italian captains. Erroneously, the most usual brown colour of these dogs (tobacco) gave birth to the legend which would mean it to be a breed originating from Havana, capital of Cuba. Political events however have led to the total disappearance of the old blood lines of the Havanese in Cuba; apparently a few dogs were successfully smuggled out from Cuba and their descendants have survived in the U.S.A.

General Appearance:

The Havanese is a sturdy little dog, low on his legs, with long, abundant hair, soft and preferably wavy. His movement is lively and elastic.

Characteristics:

[Not specified. Classified by the F.C.I. under Companion and Toy Dogs.]

Important Proportions:

The length of the muzzle (tip of nose to stop) is equal to the distance between the stop and the occipital protuberance. The relation between the length of the body (measured from the point of the shoulder to the point of the buttock) and the height at the withers is as 4:3

Temperament:

Exceptionally bright, he is easy to train as an alarm dog. Affectionate, of a happy nature, he is amiable, a charmer, playful and even a bit of a clown. He loves children and plays endlessly with them.

Head and Skull:

Of medium length, the relation between the length of the head and that of the trunk (measured from the withers to the base of the tail) is as 3:7.

Cranial Region:

Skull - Flat to very slightly rounded, broad; forehead hardly rising. Seen from above, it is rounded at the back and almost straight and square on the other three sides.

Stop - Moderately marked.

Facial Region:

Nose - Black or Brown.

Muzzle:

Narrowing, progressively and slightly, towards the nose but neither snipey nor truncated.

Lips:

Fine, lean, tight.

Cheeks:

Very flat, not prominent.

Eyes:

Quite large, almond shaped, of brown colour, as dark as possible. Kind expression. The eye rims must be dark brown to black.

Ears:

Set relatively high; they fall along the cheeks forming a discreet fold which raises them slightly. Their tips are slightly rounded. They are covered with hair in long fringes. Neither propeller ears (sticking out sideways) nor stuck to the cheeks.

Mouth:

Scissor bite. Complete dentition is desirable. The absence of premolars 1 (P1) and molars 3 (M3) is tolerated.

Neck:

Of medium length.

Forequarters:

Forelegs straight and parallel, lean; good bone structure. The distance from the ground to the elbow must not be greater than that between the elbow and the withers.

Body:

The length of the body is greater than the height at the withers [as 4:3].

Back:

Top-line straight, slightly arched over the loin.

Croup :

Noticeably sloping.

Ribs:

Well sprung.

Belly:

Well tucked up.

Hindquarters:

Good bone structure; moderate angulation.

Feet:

Of slightly elongated shape; small. Tight toes.

Tail:

Carried high, either in the shape of a crozier [a Bishop's crook] or, preferably, rolled over the back; it is furnished with feathering of long silky hair.

Gait/Movement:

In accordance with his happy nature, the Havanese has a strikingly light-footed and elastic gait; forelegs with free stride and pointing straight forward, the hind-legs giving them impulsion [drive] and moving in a straight line.

Coat:

Undercoat woolly and not very well developed; it is often totally absent. The topcoat is very long (12-18 cm [4.5-7 inches] in an adult dog), soft, flat or wavy and may form curly strands [cords]. All grooming [priming or teasing], the use of scissors to even out the length of the coat and all trimming is forbidden with the exception of tidying up the hair on the feet and the hair on the forehead may be slightly shortened so that it does not cover the eyes and the hair on the muzzle may be slightly tidied up, but it is preferable to leave it its natural length.

Colour:

Rarely completely pure white, fawn in its different shades (slight blackened overlay admitted), black, havana-brown, tobacco colour, reddish-brown. Patches in mentioned colours allowed.

Allowed colours and particolours (White, light fawn to havana-brown) with black markings. Black coat.

Size:

Height at withers: From 23- 27 cm [9-10.5 inches]

Tolerance from 21-29 cm [8-11.5 inches]

Faults:

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree.

Serious Faults:

General appearance lacking in type.

Truncated or snipey muzzle, length not identical to that of the skull.

Bird of prey eyes [yellow]; eyes too deep set or prominent; rims of eyelids partially pigmented.

Body too short or too long.

Straight tail, not carried high.

"French" front (pasterns too close, feet turned outwards).

Deformed hind feet.

Coat harsh, not abundant; hair short except on puppies; groomed [trimmed] coat.

Disqualifying Faults:

Depigmented nose. Over or undershot. Ectropion, entropion; rim of eyelids of one or both eyes depigmented. Size over or under the indicated norms of the standard [over or under the tolerated heights].

Note:

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.