



# Chihuahuas

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# The Chihuahua Dog

## About the Chihuahua Dog

Chihuahuas are vibrant, intelligent, “personality-plus” dogs. There’s a lot in that small package! The breed was brought to the U.S. in the late 1890’s by American tourists to the Mexican state of Chihuahua, and they became the area’s namesakes. Their origins prior to that time are in dispute.

It is important to make an informed pet selection and equally as important to make informed decisions throughout the life of your pet. We will take you through the process of bringing home your new family member and lead you all the way to cherishing your memories of the long life you share together. We will provide you with an outstanding number of tips and helpful advice including health tips and cautions. This complimentary book is packed full of information to fulfill your dog parenting needs. You will be given access to checklists and handy vet tips to ensure you are taking proper care of your companion animal. Take a few moments to benefit from this information and you will spend many years enjoying a loving relationship with your Chihuahua.

## Chihuahua Characteristics

The smallest of the AKC registered breeds, the Chihuahua is also very feisty. They are noted for their trim bodies, large ears, and keen intelligence. They are sensitive to cold and extreme heat, and need to be indoor pets. Chihuahuas are too small to cope well with temperature extremes – coats, booties, and minimal exposure are recommended for chilly weather, and limited time outside in the heat.

Because they tend to fixate on one person, their size, and their fondness for other Chihuahuas (or “Chis,” as they’re sometimes called), they make excellent dogs for apartment-dwellers, solitary folks, and older people. They can usually get their daily exercise running about their home. They really don’t like other breeds of dogs, or anything else that takes their owner’s focus off themselves.

Chis have a typical life span of 14-18 years. They are either short- or long-haired. The short coats are tidy, slick, and shiny. The long-haired variety has a double coat: a soft undercoat and a longer top layer than can sometimes be wavy. Both varieties should have soft fur. Chihuahuas are acceptable in any color. Ideally, their skulls are apple-shaped, but the popularity of the “Taco Bell Dog” has skewed the popular image to the narrower head shown on the spokesdog. Similarly, most reputable breeders do not differentiate their smaller Chis as “teacup” or “miniature” – there is no such thing as a separate “toy” Chihuahua. All Chihuahuas are part of the toy grouping of kennel clubs. Proper diet, exercise, grooming, and veterinary attention will benefit you and your Chihuahua.



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Average Weight	1-8 pounds; pref. 2-4	Temperament	Gentle, loving, and sweet-tempered, but protective of it's owners and wary of strangers
Average Height	6-9 inches, but can range up to 15 inches in non-show specimens	Good with Children?	Not particularly; they are more suitable for older, well behaved children (8 years of age and older)
Coat	Short-hair: glossy, slick coat, yet still soft Long-hair: softer, longer hair. Has an undercoat.	Health Concerns	Knee and respiratory, among others (see "Medical Concerns," below)



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## Selecting Your Chihuahua Puppy – Adoption or a Breeder?

It can be a matter of personal preference to adopt or rescue a Chihuahua. Chihuahuas have been overpopulating breed rescue agencies since their spike in popularity in the 1990's – many people thought they were cute, but weren't prepared for the one-on-one attention that the little guys need. Another personal choice might be to select your Chihuahua from a reputable breeder.

### A Few Words About Adoption:

Look for a pet adoption shelter or rescue center in your community. Use community resources such as your library, newspaper, and any online information to understand the reputation of the shelter before you go there. Ask questions at the center and of other people who may have used their services before. Find out as much as you can about the history of the pet(s) you are considering. Know that some pets are up for adoption, because they have been left behind due to divorce or families having to relocate. Not all pets in shelters or rescue centers come from abused or neglectful situations. Pet adoption or rescue is less expensive than purchasing from a dog breeder. For those who face economic challenges, this option is worth considering.

### A Few Words About Breeders:

Perhaps you prefer a Chihuahua that comes from a reputable breeder in order to raise your pet as a show dog or breed your pet to further the advancement of Chihuahuas in your community. Breeders are very knowledgeable about the breed's overall health and characteristics. You can find dog breeders by looking in the newspaper, searching on the internet, or checking with the local vet. Make sure the breeder is associated with the AKC.



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Dog breeders will usually be very particular about the person wanting to purchase the dog. They may want to know what other animals are in the home or if there are any children living in the home that might pose a threat to the delicate Chi. Make sure the breeders' facilities are clean and always ask to see the mother and father of the puppy you want to buy. The breeder should be able to provide a written health guarantee and all shot records. In addition, confirm that the breeder's preferences are what you are looking for in a pet.

Either option is viable based on your own knowledge, expectations, and personal convictions. The most important thing to remember when selecting your pet is to select the pet right for you. Pet ownership is a big responsibility. Select a pet that fits your lifestyle.

## How To Choose Your New Chihuahua Pup

Choosing a dog can be a difficult decision because there are many different personalities and aesthetic qualities you may want to look for. Do you prefer to have the runt of the litter or the huskiest brute? Granted, there's only so big that a Chihuahua will get, but they do range in size, even in the same litter. Pet adoptions or rescues are viable options for selecting your Chihuahua. Make sure you look for the following signs of a healthy dog:

- Bright and clear eyes
- Clean ears that are free of parasites
- Healthy coat and skin conditions
- History and lineage are necessary as the genetics of animals are much like that of humans
- Make sure paw pads are soft and well taken care of
- Plump bellies are common in healthy puppies, but be sure they're not too plump
- Tails and facial expressions can give strong clues about the pup's personality and disposition

## Before You Bring Your Chihuahua Home

It is important to puppy-proof your home and be as prepared as possible to provide a safe and secure environment for your new friend. In an effort to prepare for the care of your new best friend you should create a checklist and learn about the special needs of your pet. Make sure that your floors are free of clutter. This includes shoes and electric cords, as puppies like to chew. Use the rule "out of sight, out of mind" when introducing your puppy to his new environment. Further, Chis love to curl up in small spots – be sure that there are some safe places for your puppy to "hide" in.

Create a list of items that you need for your new pet. You will need the essentials to care for your pet such as, a good puppy food, a brush for grooming, toys for playtime, and crates or kennels for containment. Puppy pads and treats or other training products will come in handy as well. You will also want to have a selection of toys and training items. The reward system is great for teaching your pet important lessons. Some toys double as treat holders so that when playing games with your pet they have a fun way to get to their reward. Your pup will soon discover what you want from him if you use a loving manner to convey your messages.

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Items to suit your senior Chihuahua Dog:

- [Vitamins](#)
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Chihuahuas can be a little headstrong, but can be trained with liberal applications of patience, love, and positive reinforcement.

It is really important to start your pup with a good health regimen. Keep accurate health and immunization records throughout the life of your pet. This will make it much easier for you to maintain proper health standards for your animal. Be sure to introduce him early to his vet and his grooming process. These are good practices for new owners as well as the pups. Of equal importance is a healthy diet for your pet. It is a good idea to follow your breeder or vet's guidelines for all of your pet's nutrition needs. Puppy food has different nutrients than adult or senior foods. In addition, Chihuahuas will eat too much (and get a little chunky) if they are given the opportunity – be sure to feed you pet only the amount recommended by his veterinarian, spread out into several smaller meals if necessary. Allergy-sensitive animals require special dietary ingredients as well. Being prepared is the most important aspect of introducing your new family member to his or her new environment. Purchase books about your breed, ask questions of the breeder and your vet, and read about your pet online or at your community library. Pay attention to the details for true success and your new family member will make a quick and happy adjustment to his new home.

## Your Chihuahua Through the Years

### Your Chihuahua Puppy

Each stage of your pet's life will be characterized by special needs. Puppies' lives are full of learning experiences. Enjoy the time you spend with your puppy. Use chew toys or balls to keep your puppy active and know that you can use these toys not only to play but also to train your pet. Puppies learn quickly and can develop bad habits if they are not properly stimulated. Conversely, they can learn good habits if trained lovingly and early on. Be vigilant to discourage overprotective behavior in the young Chihuahua. They are true lap dogs, so be sure to lavish them with attention, too.

Healthy habits are established at this stage of life as well. Vaccinations, dietary standards, and proper grooming regimens are very important for puppies. Your Chihuahua should have clean bowls for food and water. Sometimes it is helpful to place the bowls on a non-slip surface. There are many decorative bowls and placemats available to make your pets feeding time special for him. Take extra time to get your pup used to regular grooming. Use shampoos, nail clippers, brushes, and toothbrushes to keep your pup shiny and squeaky clean. When you introduce a new grooming device to your puppy it is important to remember to let the pup become acquainted with the item before using it. Remember to put the item away when you are no longer using it or the pup might mistake it for a toy.

### Your Chihuahua Adult

As your dog begins to age, his needs begin to change. Keep surprises to a minimum by, you guessed it, being prepared. Keep your dog active and healthy. Change out his toys often to keep his interest. Sometimes adult dogs develop allergies. If you notice changes in the skin or fur, you may need to change their diet. If your pet develops allergies, you will see changes in his coat, skin, eyes or ears.



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You'll need these basics before your Terrier comes home. Click the items below to go to CheapPetStore.com to find the best prices for online pet supplies.

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#### EXPERT TIP

##### Selecting a Crate

A dog should be able to stand and turn around inside a closed crate. If you have a Chihuahua Dog puppy, consider the average height and weight of an adult Terrier and choose a crate based on those specifications. .

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If you suspect your dog has allergies, the best thing to do is take your dog to the vet. There are excellent remedies that will become an important part of your dog's routine.

As your dog ages his nails, paw pads, coat, skin, eyes and ears need special attention. Make grooming a happy time for your dog. You should keep the coat clean and free of dander, fleas, and tangled or matted hair. Also keep nails trimmed, check the pads on their paws frequently for spurs, and keep tooth tartar under control. Keep up with all of your adult pet's needs by frequently checking supplies and making sure that you have the most efficient tools handy to keep your dog in good health.

## Your Chihuahua Senior

When your pet climbs the hill into his senior years (older than 7 years or so), his needs will change again. Dietary changes are the most prevalent at this life stage. As your dog ages, so does his digestive system. Make sure your Senior Chihuahua maintains a proper diet and receives proper nutrients by starting him on a daily vitamin. Keep abreast of the latest trends in dental products. There are many tartar control products on the market today. There are bones, toys, and toothbrushes geared to an older dogs' health and happiness. Chihuahuas are pre-disposed to certain health concerns, so be aware of any changes in the gait or behavior of your senior. If your dog moves more slowly than usual or limps it could be a sign of a joint problem. You may want to provide a more appropriate sleeping and lounging area for your pet, or an orthopedic dog bed. Just remember that dogs age in some of the same ways that humans do. You can help them manage aches and pains with the proper pet healthcare aids, knowledge, and care.

Senior pets have many changes in disposition and could easily be stressed by active young children. They may show signs of increased irritability when eating or when encouraged to do something they would rather not do. Grumpy seniors have a way of making sure that you are aware when they are unhappy. It is important to know that senior animals tend to do things their own way and in their own time. Care for your senior in a loving, gentle manner mixed with a little patience and understanding.

Cherish the special moments with your pet and keep them close to your heart. Display pictures of your dog around your home or office. Develop family traditions that include your pet. Fun reminders for your family can include, celebrating your dog's birthday, exchanging sentiments on special holidays, and even sharing memorable stories about your wonderful Chi with extended family.

## Chihuahua Medical Considerations

Chihuahuas, like many pure-bred dogs, are prone to some common ailments. In addition, they have some ills that are attributable primarily to their diminutive size. They can include

- **"Reverse sneeze,"** a breathing condition common to many toy dogs, is not dangerous, but you should discuss it with your vet or breeder
- **Collapsing trachea** most assuredly IS dangerous, and it, too, is a toy-sized dog affliction. It is recommended that owners of toy dogs do not smoke to avoid endangering them. The condition can be treated with medication.



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- **Shivering** is not primarily a function of the cold, but usually of nerves and small size of the Chihuahua
- **Luxation of the patella**, or dislocation of the kneecap (i.e., in the rear legs), is another problem common to toys. Chis with this problem should not be used in breeding programs.
- **Hypoglycemia** – be sure your Chihuahua eats throughout the day, rather than chowing down all at once. This is especially vital for very small Chihuahuas and puppies.
- **Moleras** are common to Chihuahuas. This is a soft spot on the top of the head, similar to that in human infants. It is not a source of alarm. Unlike human babies, Chihuahuas' moleras do not always close. This is simply something to keep in mind, the same way you would avoid squashing your small dog.
- **Hydrocephalus**, or water on the brain, is a completely different issue than a molera. Hydrocephalytic dogs have a grim prognosis, and usually do not survive to be adopted.
- **Heart murmurs** are infrequent and usually mild in Chis, but they do occur
- Chihuahuas' protuberant eyes and tiny height make them vulnerable to **eye problems**
- Some Chis inherit neurological problems such as **epilepsy** or other **seizure disorders**.
- Finally, know that your small dog will have greater potential difficulties in under going **anesthesia**, **birthing**, and **dental care**.



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## Popular Products for Your Chihuahua

- [Dog Pound Jersey](#)
- [Pucci Warm Up Suit](#)
- [Dog Door Dead Bolt Security Door](#)
- [Pro Pac Dry Dog Food](#)
- [Vittles Vault Soft Side Food Storage Container](#)
- [Health Measures](#)
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