

# **DISCOVER THE BASSET HOUND!**

*A Guide To This Fascinating Breed*



Published By The Public Education Committee  
of The Basset Hound Club of America

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Edited for the BHCA Website



## ORIGIN OF THE BASSET HOUND

### What is a Basset Hound?

The Basset Hound is a long, low, scenting hound of French ancestry. His many admirers consider him to be among the most beautiful and unusual of all hounds, his dignified look owing in great part to a large, majestic head adorned with long, velvety ears, a wrinkled brow and dark, soulful eyes. The Basset Hound remains one of the most easily recognizable of all dog breeds.

The Basset Hound originated in sixth-century France, a country known for its many strains of hounds. Most strains had a tall version as well as a short-legged size under sixteen inches, which were called “*basset*” (*bas* in French means low-set). Both the Basset Hound and its long-legged cousin, the Bloodhound, are thought to be descendants of the famed St. Hubert hounds. St. Hubert, a churchman, was the patron saint of the hunt, who set out to develop a new strain of hound, which looked similar to today’s Bloodhound. Many authorities feel the Basset was a result of a mutation in the St. Hubert strain. This genetic deviation produced a short-legged, dwarfed hound, whose slower movement and low-set form was to prove useful for hunters on foot in search of small game. With his long ears helping to stir up the scent, packs of Bassets were used to drive small prey, such as rabbit and hare, from dense undercover into open terrain where hunters could move in for the kill with spears, nets or clubs. The sport of pack hunting with Basset Hounds continues to this day in France and England.

## UNDERSTANDING THE BASSET HOUND

### The Basset Personality

Despite a deliberate, unhurried manner and captivatingly clownish demeanor, the Basset Hound possesses great intelligence and what may often be viewed as stubbornness may more appropriately be attributed to an innate ingenuity. In fact, the Basset excels at getting his way, from “demanding” a tasty morsel at the table to hurling his hefty 65 pounds into your lap! His overly long body, short legs and delightful wrinkles become a kaleidoscope of amusing expressions, all cleverly orchestrated to win us over. And win us over he does. Gentle and sociable in nature, the easy-going Basset Hound is loyal to master and family, devoted to children and mild-mannered and friendly towards other animals.

## PERSONALITY & PHYSICAL TRAITS OF THE BASSET HOUND

- **Calm, good-natured and affectionate.** Gets along well with people and other dogs and pets. Good with children. Loves to be a lap dog. Not a good guard dog.
- **Sensitive and stubborn nature.** A Basset takes punishment and reprimands to heart. Can be stubborn and conveniently “hard of hearing.”
- **Pack mentality.** A single Basset may not do well left alone for long periods. For working owners, the company of another dog is the next best thing to having you there.
- **A scent hound.** The Basset was bred to trail game. His keen nose can lead him into dangerous situations such as the path of a speeding car or an unfenced swimming pool. The Basset is safest in a secure, enclosed area.
- **Relatively low activity level. Prone to obesity.** Healthy, trim Bassets have good energy levels, but they are also content to snooze away the afternoon in a patch of warm sun. Although this laid back nature makes them desirable house pets, their weight must be kept in check. A daily walk with your Basset is recommended.
- **A large, hefty dog, possessing more bone for its size than any other breed of dog.** Although Bassets are low to the ground, they are not small dogs, with most ranging from 50 to 65 pounds. The average person will have a difficult time lifting an adult Basset Hound.
- **A smooth-coated dog.** A wash-and-wear dog who may be bathed as frequently as needed. Bassets are either tri-colored (a combination of black, white and tan) or red-and-white (a lighter red-and-white may be called lemon-and-white). Coat colors are distributed over the body in no particular pattern.
- **Growing puppies have special needs.** Until they are a year old, Basset puppies should not go up and down long flights of stairs or be allowed to jump on and off elevated objects such as couches, beds or porches. The joints of this heavy-boned breed are still forming and excessive stress or strain may cause permanent injury. After a year of age, these activities, within reason, are usually not harmful to your Basset.
- **Short legs may mean a needed boost!** Many, but not all, sturdy, low-slung Basset Hounds may require assistance getting into a car. The unique, low-stationed Basset does not excel at jumping.
- **Long ears and droopy eyes need cleaning. Nails need trimming.** The long ears of a Basset do not allow good circulation of air and are prone to infection. Owners should clean their dog’s ears once a week. The Basset’s droopy eyes should also be kept clean of debris and nails trimmed once or twice monthly



## **IS A BASSET HOUND THE RIGHT DOG FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?**

**Before making the decision to purchase a Basset Hound, ask yourself the following questions.**

1. If you have been accustomed to dogs with high energy levels, will you be happy with the calm, even temperament of the Basset Hound?
2. Bassets do not make good jogging companions and are not the best dog with which to have a game of catch. Will the Basset fit your lifestyle expectations?
3. Because of their long ears, low-slung structure and hefty size, Bassets have special needs, including needing their ears cleaned 3 or 4 times a month. Will you enjoy meeting these needs?
4. Because they possess a hunting instinct, Bassets tend to roam and should be kept in a secure, fenced area. Are you able to provide this type of environment for your Basset?
5. A single Basset may not do well when left alone for long periods. Will you have the time to give your Basset a great deal of attention and affection?
6. The friendly, easy-going personality of the Basset makes him a poor guard dog. Is this acceptable to you?

If you have answered yes to the above questions then a Basset Hound may be the right dog for you.

## **HOW TO FIND A GOOD BASSET HOUND**

The best place to obtain a well-bred Basset Hound is from a reputable breeder. The key here is “reputable”. At all costs, avoid backyard breeders and puppy mills, who work with poor quality bloodlines which may be genetically prone to a host of health problems. Backyard breeders and puppy mills are only interested in making a quick buck, frequently advertising in local newspapers or selling entire litters to pet stores for resale.

### **How to distinguish reputable breeders from backyard breeders and puppy mills**

#### **Reputable breeders:**

- Are usually members of The Basset Hound Club of America, Inc. (BHCA) or a regional Basset Hound breed club (refer to the Directory of Basset Hound Breed Clubs at: [http://www.basset-bhca.org/About\\_BHCA/Member\\_Club.htm](http://www.basset-bhca.org/About_BHCA/Member_Club.htm)) and believe in working towards improving the conformation and performance of the Basset Hound. BHCA members are guided by a Code of Ethical Conduct ([http://www.basset-bhca.org/About\\_BHCA/ethics.htm](http://www.basset-bhca.org/About_BHCA/ethics.htm)).
- Ask many questions of prospective owners in order to ensure their puppy is going to a good home.
- Unless other arrangements are made, usually require that the pets they sell be spayed or neutered.
- Often compete with their Bassets in conformation, obedience, agility, field trialing or tracking.
- Stand behind the health of their puppies.
- May wish to be contacted if a puppy they bred must be placed in a new home.

## FINDING A REPUTABLE BREEDER

1. Contact the **Basset Hound Club of America, Inc.**, the **American Kennel Club** or a **local Basset Hound breed club** (refer to the useful addresses listed below) and request names of breeders in your area.
2. Attend dog shows and talk to breeders, handlers and other owners who may be able to give you referrals on obtaining a puppy.
3. Ask your veterinarian or people in your local dog club or training center if they know of reputable AKC Basset Hound breeders in your area.

## PEOPLE TO CALL TO FIND A BASSET HOUND

To locate a basset hound you may contact the following people who are **Basset Hound Club of America (BHCA) Breeder Referral Contacts:**

- **Mrs.Chardell Patrick, *Chairman, Public Education Committee***  
Medina, OH 44256-8926  
email: [BasetBob@aol.com](mailto:BasetBob@aol.com)
- **Ms. Corey Rigoni**  
Wixom, MI  
email: [MICHBASSET@aol.com](mailto:MICHBASSET@aol.com)
- **Ellen Rowe Ferguson**  
Miami, Fl  
Email: [KaleidoscopeEllen@yahoo.com](mailto:KaleidoscopeEllen@yahoo.com)
- **Lynne Tatarowicz**  
email: [leko2@aol.com](mailto:leko2@aol.com)

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

**BUGLER** (A monthly Basset Hound Publication - \$15.00 per year)  
Riche Churchill, Editor  
5972 Francis Ferry Road  
McMinnville, TN 37110-4162  
1-931-686-2012  
E-mail: [buglr@Infoave.net](mailto:buglr@Infoave.net)

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**The Babler** (A subscription publication aimed mainly at the field trial Basset Hound)  
Marjorie Skolnick, Editor  
P.O. Box 100  
Harwood, Maryland 20776-0100  
410-867-3182  
E-mail: [slipperyhill@Infoave.net](mailto:slipperyhill@Infoave.net)

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**The American Kennel Club (AKC)**  
5580 Centerview Drive  
Suite 200  
Raleigh, NC 27605-3390  
1-919-233-9767 or 1-800-252-5545

## QUESTIONS BREEDERS MAY ASK BUYERS

1. **Have you ever owned dogs before and specifically, a Basset Hound?** Familiarity with owning dogs ensures a higher success rate in placing a puppy in a new home. It is a particular “plus” if a perspective buyer has had the experience of owning a unique breed like the Basset Hound.
2. **Why do you want a Basset Hound?** It is important to determine if the relaxed, low-slung Basset Hound will be the right choice for a new buyer. This short-legged breed, for example, is not the best choice for an avid jogger or person who wants to play a game of catch with their dog.
3. **Do you have a fenced backyard?** Being a scent hound, Bassets tend to roam and may become injured or lost. Chaining a Basset (or any breed) to an outdoor dog house or tree is inhumane as well as dangerous.
4. **Where will your new puppy live?** The friendly, affectionate Basset Hound craves the companionship of other animals or people, It will be happiest in the house where it can be cared for by a loving family.
5. **How long will the puppy be alone during the day?** Breeders are reluctant to place a Basset puppy in a home where it will be alone for excessively long periods. The companionship of another dog or cat will go a long way in providing companionship for a new dog.
6. **Are you willing to spay or neuter a pet Basset Hound?** Spaying or neutering is usually required by responsible breeders who wish to protect their valuable bloodlines.
7. **Can you afford not only the purchase price of this pet but also the maintenance?** New owners need to be aware of how much it costs to keep their pet healthy and well-taken care of.
8. **Is the decision to purchase a Basset Hound a unanimous one in your family?** Bassets that go into a family situation where not everyone wanted this unique breed may start out with a couple strikes against them.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK A BREEDER

1. **How long have you been breeding AKC Basset Hounds?** Good breeders have usually been breeding for a minimum of 3 or 4 years.
2. **Do you belong to the Basset Hound Club of America or a regional Basset Hound Club?** Membership in these clubs involves working within a code of ethics which helps give credibility to a breeder.
3. **What type of activities do your dogs participate in?** Many breeders show their Basset Hounds and may participate in showing, obedience, agility, tracking or field trialing competition.
4. **Do you have any puppies available, and if not, when do you plan another litter?** If they have puppies available, the majority of breeders will put your name on a waiting list. Other breeders whose lists are full are usually more than willing to refer you to reputable breeders in their area.
5. **What kind of warranty do you offer?** Most breeders will guarantee the health of a puppy for a specific period of time and if something goes wrong will offer to replace the puppy with another one or give a full refund. Warranties differ with each breeder.
6. **What is the price of the dog?** A pet puppy is usually less expensive than a show prospect.
7. **What type of paperwork do you provide and will it include proof of vaccinations and worming?** Breeders should provide a Bill of Sale, a contract detailing the conditions of the sale and a copy of the puppy’s health record. In some cases, breeders may withhold AKC registration papers until they have received notification from your veterinarian that the puppy has been spayed or neutered.



## **NEVER BUY A BASSET FROM A PET STORE!**

- Pet store Basset Hounds come from backyard breeders and puppy mills. Most likely, you will not know who bred your dog or have anyone to contact if you have questions or a problem.
- The health of pet store Bassets is always at risk because they were not bred by knowledgeable breeders devoted to improving the health and appearance of the Basset Hound. Pet store puppies are separated from their mothers at too early an age and usually do not have the chance to develop healthy bodies and temperaments. In fact, pet store Bassets often become seriously ill and end up costing their owners hundreds and even thousands of dollars in veterinary expenses.

Pet stores do not guarantee the long term health of a puppy.

- Most pet store Basset Hounds are smaller than those from reputable kennels and often lack the majestic wrinkled head and expression that define the Basset Hound. In fact, they may look more like Beagles than Basset Hounds.
- Despite the inferiority of the dogs they sell, pet stores usually charge as much, if not more, than reputable breeders of quality Basset Hounds.

**No matter how impatient you or your children are to get a Basset Hound, it is always better to wait, even a few months, and get one from a good breeder!!**

## ***ADOPTING A BASSET RESCUE DOG***

Basset Rescue groups are devoted to finding homes for Basset Hounds that have been abandoned or given up by their owners. Many of these Bassets end up in local humane shelters and unless suitable homes are found for these animals, they are destroyed. For this reason, Basset rescue groups have been formed in many parts of the country and local Basset breed clubs may support a Basset Rescue group which tries to find new families for these abandoned Bassets.



### **Advantages of Adopting a Basset Rescue Dog**

1. Many people find joy and pleasure in giving a “new home” to a dog that was deserted by its former owners.
2. Most Basset rescue dogs are adults and many are already housebroken as well as spayed and neutered.
3. Rescue dogs are often an alternative for a loving family who truly wants a Basset Hound but may not be able to afford the price of a new puppy from a breeder.

### **Disadvantages of Adopting a Rescue Dog**

1. In some cases rescue Bassets have been abused and severely mistreated by their former owners. The adoptive family may therefore need to be especially understanding and spend more time helping their new friend fit into its new home. Many rescue Bassets may be timid or shy until they have had a chance to adapt to their new surroundings. With love and patience, most of these Bassets blossom into endearing pets.

## **SHOULD YOU CHOOSE A MALE OR A FEMALE?**

Unlike more aggressive breeds like Rottweilers or German Shepherds, there is relatively little difference in temperament, activity or trainability between a male and female Basset Hound. Both make excellent companion pets. Females (bitches) which are not spayed go into season (or heat) approximately every 6 months. Bitches also tend to weigh on average about 10 pounds less than males.

## **SPAYING AND NEUTERING**

If you purchase a companion pet puppy from a reputable breeder it is usually with the requirement that females will be spayed and males neutered. This prevents adding to the huge over-population of unwanted dogs in today's society. Spaying and neutering is a win/win situation for both you and your Basset. You will eliminate the mess of twice-yearly seasons in your bitch as well as helping prevent unwanted pregnancies, tumors and other female disorders. Neutered males also become more settled and are not tempted by bitches in season. Spaying and neutering do not change the "personality" of your pet.

## **THE PURCHASE OF AN ADULT VERSUS A PUPPY**

For some prospective new owners the selection of an adult Basset may be an appropriate choice. Reputable breeders often have adult Bassets available who have been retired from the show ring or from the breeding program. In some cases, breeders will place in pet homes males that are still being used in their breeding program with the understanding that the male will remain in the breeder's name, cannot be neutered and will need to go to the breeder's kennel from time to time to be bred. Former brood bitches who are now spayed may also be placed permanently in pet homes. In both cases, this type of arrangement can work well for the person looking for a good pet Basset Hound.

## **PURCHASING A COMPANION PET BASSET**

After you have decided that the Basset Hound is the breed for you it will be necessary for you to decide if you want a pet or show quality Basset. The majority of prospective new owners want a companion pet Basset Hound. Breeders usually sell as pets those Bassets that do not come as close to the official breed Standard as other puppies in the litter. Pets may have cosmetic flaws which are not desirable in the show ring. In the eyes of the pet owner these features are rarely seen as flaws. It is also important to understand that pet quality does not mean that a dog is in any way less healthy than a show prospect.

## **THE BASSET IN OBEDIENCE, AGILITY, TRACKING OR FIELD TRIALING**

### **Bassets in Obedience and Agility**

Although the Basset Hound has never topped the list as one of the best breeds to use for obedience and agility, there are many Bassets who have done well in these areas. The Basset Hound does not lack for intelligence but rather is characterized by a "hound" mentality which translates into an attitude of independence of thought and action.

### **Tracking and Field Trialing**

In addition to obedience and agility, the talented Basset Hound also participates in tracking (following human scent) and field trialing (following rabbit scent). If you are interested in tracking or field trialing, it is advisable to seek out those who participate in these activities. Information can be obtained from the Basset Hound Club of America



## **PURCHASING A SHOW PROSPECT**

Good Basset Hound breeders strive to produce dogs that meet the description of the Basset Hound in the official breed Standard. When "show quality" Basset Hounds compete against other Bassets at a dog show, a judge compares each Basset against what the Standard defines as the ideal Basset. The Basset that comes closest to this ideal is the one that wins.

Show prospects are usually sold for a higher price than a pet quality dog. Some breeders will sell a show prospect outright with no strings attached. Other breeders may sell one for less money but with certain requirements. It is not uncommon for a breeder to want lifetime breeding rights to a particularly outstanding male or to want a puppy out of a good quality bitch, in addition to choosing the sire for her first breeding. If the new owners are novices, the breeder may wish to co-own the show prospect so that he or she has "control" over which bitches a male is bred to or which sire a bitch is bred to. It is not uncommon for a breeder who sells a show prospect to require that the dog be shown to its championship.

Details relative to the purchase of a show prospect *should be clearly spelled out and written down in contract form* in order to avoid problems down the line. It is important to specify expenses that the new owners will assume and those that the breeder will assume as well as how puppies will be chosen in a future litter, who will cover whelping costs, veterinary fees, etc., if these are part of the sales agreement.

### **A couple of points concerning your search for a show puppy:**

- (1) The availability of Basset show puppies is usually low, averaging one or two really good puppies in a litter.
- (2) The Basset Hound is a particularly changeable breed in its physical development from puppy to adult. It is safer to purchase an animal that is older (around 6 months) or has already been started to be shown and has a number of solid wins and points under its belt.

## **THE DECISION TO PURCHASE A BASSET HOUND**

Once you have decided that the Basset Hound is the right breed for you and you have located a reputable breeder who has puppies available, the next step may be receiving a set of polaroid photos in the mail or an invitation to come and see the puppies. Although buyers may sometimes be able to choose between 2 or 3 puppies, it is not unusual for many breeders to select a puppy for each buyer based on what they feel is the best match for what the buyer is looking for and the unique personality of a particular puppy.



### **MAKING YOUR HOME SAFE FOR YOUR PUPPY**

Puppies are curious and will get into anything and everything! Safeguard your new puppy as you would a toddler.

1. Block off access to all stairs, balconies and decks from which a puppy could fall. Swimming pools should be fenced. For the first year, don't let your Basset puppy climb stairs or jump off sofas, beds, etc. His joints are still forming and may become injured.
2. Keep anything toxic such as household cleaners, detergents, etc. away from your puppy. In a garage area, clean up any gasoline spills and be especially careful of spilled antifreeze, which can kill. Dogs seem to love its smell and taste.
3. Keep phone cords, electrical cords and outlets away from your puppy and block access to spaces behind TV's, refrigerators, etc. Remove sharp objects and things that could fall on your puppy.
4. Don't allow access to poisonous plants such as azaleas, poison ivy, mistletoe, holly and philodendron, among others.
5. Never leave small objects or children's toys, which a puppy could swallow, lying on the floor. A puppy will pick almost anything up in its mouth. Even a coin which falls to the floor can be potentially harmful if your puppy swallows it.
6. Eliminate the possibility of your puppy getting its head caught in any type of tight spot which could lead to strangulation. These could be things like railings, trellises or fences. Don't chain your puppy outside unattended.
7. Eliminate exposure to toxic fumes, lead-based paints and rat poisons.
8. Be sure all doors in your house close securely and that visitors are aware of the importance of closing doors. Many a puppy has been killed by a car when someone forgot to close a door securely.

## THE BASSET HOUND SHOPPING LIST:



### THINGS TO BUY FOR YOUR PUPPY

1. One crate to fit an adult Basset Hound, such as a Vari-Kennel Size 300, or any crate approaching the dimensions of 21"X 24"X 36".
2. Bedding for the crate. This can be a blanket or a large soft towel.
3. A 2-quart stainless steel bowl for food.
4. A heavy ceramic bowl for water. 2 or 3 quart size.
5. A high quality puppy food. Your breeder may recommend a particular brand.
6. A 6 foot long web leash.
7. A 17" nylon adjustable buckle collar. Don't use a choke collar on a puppy. It

can injure his throat. A choke training collar can be purchased when your dog is older.

8. Nail clippers or nail grinder.
9. Kwick-Stop (Stops the bleeding if you cut your puppy's nails too short)
10. An ear cleaner. Many are available in your pet store.
11. Cotton balls or Q-tips for cleaning your puppy's ears every week.
12. Puppy shampoo.
13. A hound glove for brushing your puppy.
14. Nutritious puppy treats or biscuits.
15. Toys which are safe for puppies.

### THINGS TO TAKE WHEN YOU PICK UP YOUR PUPPY

When the big day arrives for you to pick up your Basset Hound puppy you will need to take the following items with you in the car: a collar and lead, a crate with a towel or blanket inside, extra towels, a container of water and a bowl, paper towels, a spray cleaner, several plastic bags in case towels get soiled, a toy.

### BRINGING YOUR PUPPY HOME

Following are a few tips to ensure that you give your new Basset puppy all the help it needs in learning to adjust to its new home.

1. **Don't have unrealistic expectations.** Don't expect your puppy to "know" what to do once you get it home. Remember, your puppy will be lonely the first few days and nights that it is separated from its litter mates and familiar routine. Like children, puppies need to be taught what is expected of them.
2. **Decide ahead of time who will be responsible for caring for your puppy.** If you have children it is best to divide the duties among them.
3. **Crate training should begin as soon as you bring your new puppy home.** It is important to understand that crating a puppy is not cruel since all dogs have a nesting instinct and the desire to find a protected spot of their own. The crate becomes your puppy's special "room" where he can feel protected and sleep or relax. Crating will help your puppy adjust to its new home, keep it safe when you are away for short periods and help in the housebreaking process, since dogs, by nature, do not like to eliminate in their dens. Teach your puppy to sleep in its crate the first night you bring him home. As hard as it may be, don't give in to his crying or barking. It may take him a couple of days to stop missing his littermates. Feeding your puppy in his crate and crating him in the car (the safest form of travel for your pet) will also help him adjust to his new quarters. By outfitting a crate with clean, soft, comfortable bedding and some special toys, all puppies soon learn to appreciate their special "room."
4. **Set up a "dog area."** Young puppies and even older dogs need their own space where they can get away from children and the hub-bub of a busy family. In addition to crate training your puppy, you may also designate an area such as a laundry room or other room preferably with a tiled floor which can be sectioned off with a baby gate. Puppies that are 2 to 4 months old need plenty of sleep. Your puppy may play for 30 minutes and then need to sleep for an hour or two. Don't stress a new puppy if it shows signs of needing to rest. Put him in his crate or dog area so he can sleep undisturbed.

## **HOUSEBREAKING: A CONSISTENT SCHEDULE IS THE KEY**



- The minute you arrive home with your puppy take him outside to a spot so he can eliminate (use the same spot each time). Do this before bringing him in the house.
- Literally keep on eye on your puppy at all times indoors and outdoors when you first bring him home. You may have to do this for a couple of weeks or months until he is housebroken.
- When you are not able to watch him, confine him to a crate.
- Until your puppy is housebroken, confine him to a crate at night. Do not give in to crying and whining! He will soon learn to accept being crated. At night, take him out one last time as late as you can and wake up as early as possible to let him out in the morning. Until he is housebroken, be sure his crate is not too big or he may be tempted to eliminate in a corner of the crate. Don't provide water after 6 pm.
- Take a 2 or 3 month old puppy outside to eliminate every 3 or 4 hours. The more consistently you follow a schedule the better.
- Key times to take him out are first thing in the morning, after waking up from a nap, 15 to 20 minutes after eating and after playtime. Do not play with your puppy before he has eliminated.
- Watch for your puppy's signals that he needs to eliminate; the most common are sniffing, circling or going to the door. Take him out the same door each time and to the same elimination space outdoors.
- Allow plenty of time for elimination. Use a key phrase to signal elimination such as "Do your business!" Some puppies need 20 minutes or more. Walking your puppy on a lead can help stimulate a bowel movement.
- When your puppy eliminates reward him immediately with a treat, affection or playtime.
- Maintain a regular feeding schedule and do not leave food down for more than 20 minutes.
- Only reprimand your puppy if you catch him in the act of soiling in the house. Thoroughly clean and disinfect the soiled area to remove any odor.

**Housebreaking When Owners Work** Eight to 12 week old puppies do not have the colon and bladder control to go more than 3 or 4 hours without eliminating. Following are suggestions for working owners:

1. Install a doggy door which goes out to a secure fenced area or arrange for someone to let your puppy out every 4 hours.
2. If the above arrangement is not possible, set up an elimination area in a confined area or room in your home. Thick pads of newspaper may be used for this purpose.
3. At the age of 8 or 9 months a puppy has more bladder and bowel control and at this time the indoor elimination area can be progressively made smaller until it is eliminated altogether.
4. When you are using the inside elimination area as part of training, remove this area when you are at home and can supervise the puppy. Everything must be done to encourage elimination outside.
5. As your puppy progresses, teach him to eliminate while on a leash and on different types of surfaces. This will help avoid problems if you and your dog are in unfamiliar surroundings or another house.

## **SOME FEEDING TIPS**

**Follow the breeder's instructions for feeding your new puppy. Other tips include:**

- Don't feed your puppy table scraps. This turns a dog into a finicky eater and can lead to obesity. Changes in food can also cause diarrhea.
- Don't feed your puppy chicken, pork or fish bones. These can lodge in the throat and puncture the stomach and intestines.
- Stick to a feeding schedule and feed in the same place. Feeding at the same time helps the housebreaking process.
- If you travel with your puppy bring water from home. Changes in water may lead to diarrhea.

- Bassets are prone to obesity. Don't over feed your Basset! Some Bassets seem to "live on air" and require very little food to maintain a proper weight. When you look down on your Basset you should not see his stomach protruding from his sides. You should also be able to feel your Bassets ribs under his skin.
- Don't be concerned if your puppy is "off" his feed during the first couple of days in his new home. Separation from his littermates, combined with adjusting to a new environment can sometimes affect your puppy's appetite for the first couple of days. Call your breeder if the problem persists.



## **EXERCISING YOUR BASSET HOUND**

Bassets need only moderate amounts of exercise. Puppies who have daily access to a fenced yard will usually get enough physical activity. Care must be taken not to over-exercise a puppy while their muscles and bones are still forming. Until the age of 4 to 6 months, it is important that puppies be allowed to sleep after their play period or exercise and that children

understand the need for their puppy to rest. Because a Basset's short legs do not allow it to easily keep up with someone who is running, a daily walk, with frequent rest stops, is one of the best forms of exercise for you and your new friend.

## **GROOMING THE BASSET HOUND**

The unique structure and size of the Basset Hound mean a little extra care on the part of its owner.

### **Cleaning ears**

The long ears of a Basset Hound do not allow good circulation of air and are therefore prone to infection. Owners need to clean the inside of their Basset's ears once a week with a mild astringent or one of the many ear cleaners available from your local pet store or veterinarian. After the cleaning solution is applied to the inside of the ear, use kleenex, Q-tips or baby wipes to clean away the dirt. Start cleaning a puppy's ears as soon as you bring him home and be diligent about frequently checking them for parasites such as mites and ticks

### **Cleaning eyes**

With its droopy haw, the Basset's eyes are prone to irritation. Eyes should be checked and gently cleaned whenever necessary.

### **Cleaning teeth**

A Basset's teeth and gums should be kept clean and healthy. Teeth should be brushed and checked for tartar on a regular basis. For those knowledgeable with the use of a scaler, small tartar deposits can be carefully removed at home. Heavy tartar build-up should be removed by a veterinarian.

### **Cleaning the anal sacs**

A Basset's anal sacs, which are located on either side of the anus, should to be checked and emptied regularly to avoid impaction and infection. Bassets with impacted anal sacs often drag their rear ends on the floor. Sacs are cleaned by holding the dog's tail up and gently squeezing each sac. The smelly contents of impacted sacs will then squirt out. Owners who need assistance with this procedure should ask their veterinarians.

### **Trimming your Basset's toenails**

A Basset's nails need to be kept short to prevent soreness and stress on the feet. Nails should be trimmed every 10 to 14 days. Various types of nail clippers are available for this purpose. Your veterinarian will be happy to teach you how to trim your Basset's nails. Some puppies may resist nail trimming but with patience and a gentle approach by their owners they soon learn not to resist this important part of grooming.

## Grooming the Basset coat

Brush the Basset coat weekly with a grooming mitt. Shedding coats are best handled with a shedding rake or slicker brush. Gently clean the head and ears with a damp cloth.

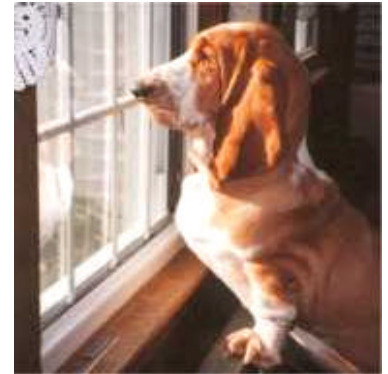
## Bathing the Basset Hound

Bassets can be bathed as often as necessary with a dog shampoo. Many owners regularly use a flea and tick shampoo. Thorough rinsing is necessary. To avoid getting shampoo and soapy water inside the ears, cotton balls may be placed inside the ear canals. Also avoid getting soap in the eyes. Terry cloth towels or an electric hair dryer may be used to dry the Basset.

## HEALTH CONCERNS FOR BASSETS

Although compared to many other breeds, the Basset has relatively fewer inherited diseases, it is still necessary to know about the following health problems that can occur in the Basset Hound.

**Panosteitis** (Pano, wandering lameness, puppy limp) An inflammation of the long bones often seen in Bassets from 5 months of age to two years. Because dogs outgrow pano, it is not considered a serious health problem. Lameness caused by pano may move from one leg to another and can last from a week to 6 months or more. Bassets with pano should not be exercised until symptoms disappear. *Although pano itself is not serious, if a Basset is otherwise injured and the ensuing lameness is mistakenly attributed to pano, lasting harm may result. Because X-rays can determine the presence of pano, a veterinarian should be consulted in any case of lameness.*



**Von Willebrand's Disease (VWD)** A genetic disorder of the blood which may cause moderate to severe bleeding, similar in some ways to hemophilia. Up to 15% of Bassets may carry this platelet abnormality.

**Thrombopathia** Another blood platelet disorder, also similar to hemophilia. The clinical presence of Von Willebrand's and thrombopathia are fairly easy for Basset owners to spot because bleeding which cannot be stopped is the symptom of these disorders.

**Glaucoma** This eye disorder has been found in the Basset Hound breed. Symptoms include painful, bulging eyes and sensitivity to light. Consult a veterinarian immediately.

**Eyelid and eyelash problems** Bassets are prone to ectropion (a turning out of the eyelids), resulting in a dry cornea, and entropion (a turning in of the eyelids), causing lashes to dig into the surface of the eye. Both conditions can be surgically corrected.

**Intervertebral Disk Disease** Herniated disks may result in dogs who frequently jump from extremely high heights onto their front limbs.

**Allergies** Some Bassets may be prone to allergies, dermatitis and seborrhea.

**Ear Infections** The Basset's long ears do not allow sufficient circulation of air. Ear infections often develop because owners are not diligent about cleaning their Basset's ears every week.

**Bloat (Gastric torsion)** The stomach twists and traps gas inside, causing extreme pain. Unless treated quickly, death may result. Avoid exercise after eating. Placing a very large rock in a Basset's feeding bowl to slow down eating and swallowing air, may help prevent bloat in some cases.

**Obesity** Obesity is especially harmful for long-backed breeds like Bassets. Spines and joints cannot handle the stress of excess weight.

## PREVENTATIVE HEALTH MEASURES THAT OWNERS CAN TAKE

- Buy a Basset Hound from a reputable breeder who will stand behind the health of his/her dog. Pet store and puppy mill Bassets are always more susceptible to numerous health problems and genetic defects.
- Don't overfeed your Basset. Obesity is harmful to your Basset Hound's heart, spine and joints.
- Religiously clean your Basset's ears once a week, trim toenails once every two weeks as well as check for impacted anal glands. Scale teeth every two weeks.
- Give your Basset regular heartworm medication and check for fleas and ticks.
- Immunize your Basset for distemper, parvovirus, hepatitis, leptospirosis and parainfluenza.
- Do not let puppies climb long flights of stairs or jump off objects such as beds, couches or porches, especially before one year of age.
- Never let your Basset wander loose in the neighborhood.
- A Basset is safest in a secure, fenced area.
- If there is any sign of a medical problem contact your veterinarian immediately.



## TRAINING YOUR BASSET

Providing some basic training for your Basset will make it a safer and happier pet. Enrolling in a local obedience class can be a rewarding and bonding experience for you and your new puppy. Owners can check their local newspapers, request information from local pet stores or ask their veterinarians about obedience classes that may be available in their area.

## SHOULD I BREED MY BASSET HOUND?

Unless you have purchased a "show quality" basset and have a pre-arranged future breeding agreement with a reputable breeder at the time you purchase your basset hound, **it is not advisable to breed your pet basset.**

**Basset Hounds that are purchased from pet stores or back yard breeders should not be bred because their puppies will not improve the breed as a whole, which is the goal of a breeder.**

### **Do not breed your basset for any of the following reasons:**

- You love your pet's personality and want to have puppies like him or her.
- You think it would be a good experience for your children.
- You plan to make a money on the litter
- It will provide a nurturing or sexual experience for your pet.

A litter should be bred only after much thought, study and research has been done by the prospective breeder and with the help of an experienced breeder who is a mentor. If you do decide to breed your basset be prepared to make the following commitments:

- Have flexible working hours.
- Be able to function on little or almost no sleep.
- Have a least one person to stay with the puppies at all times.
- Be prepared to deal with illness or death of any puppies you place or decide to keep.
- Be prepared to keep puppies you can't place and the possibility of caring for geriatric dogs.
- Be aware that puppies are extremely noisy and require hours of cleaning up after and socializing.
- Be prepared to pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars in vet bills if something "goes wrong" with the litter.

# **THE BASSET HOUND CLUB OF AMERICA'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE QUESTION OF BREEDING YOUR BASSET HOUND**



Because the question of whether or not to breed your pet basset hound is so important, below we have printed the Basset Hound Club of America's recommendation (reprint is from **"Congratulations on your new Basset Hound!" Copyright BHCA, INC. 2001**):

## **TO BREED OR NOT**

"New owners frequently ask, "Shall I breed my dog?" the answer is complicated, for there is much to consider. Breeding is not a casual undertaking. All breeds have genetic defects which can be passed along from parent to puppy. The Basset is no exception. Responsible knowledgeable breeders know these problems and strive to avoid them when selecting mates.

"Breeding is a commitment. You must have a good understanding of the breed standard and what health problems exist. You must study canine structure and movement. You must breed only the best and be prepared to spend considerable time, effort and money. Bassets may have several major health problems, some of which can be detected through testing (bleeding disorders, glaucoma) and others to which he may be predisposed including bloat and immune deficiencies. And of course, one must be very careful with temperament, for this trait is also hereditary and the dog or bitch with known genetic problems should not be used for breeding.

"The breeder who encourages the AKC limited registration, a spay-neuter or non-breeding agreement, is the one who understands the over-population problem and has concern for the future of the breed.

"Old wives tales regarding the benefits of breeding abound. They are just that – old wives tales. You will have a healthier, happier pet if he or she is neutered or spayed. Your dog's disposition will not change adversely with alteration. In fact, you will have a more polite house pet who will not be apt to wander or leave his mark on your couch or cabinets if neutered. And having a litter is in no way beneficial to a female; in fact, it can lead to problems, even death. It is fact that spayed bitches often live longer and have fewer health problems than unsplayed females.

"Breeding dogs is a real responsibility. One must have knowledge of what makes top quality animals, understanding of pedigrees and genetics, and have proper facilities to keep and socialize puppies and to take them back, is the situation demands. Also financial resources for shots, food and unfortunate medical emergencies are also necessary. The average size of a Basset litter is 6 to 8, though 10-12 also occurs. Pet population is a serious problem in all breeds today. Bassets are being produced by indiscriminate breeders in unhealthy environments and with serious health problems which are likely to cause much financial and emotional stress for the owners. Many dogs are put to death annually in animal shelters, and Bassets share in those statistics. You would not want to contribute to this problem.

"As with all American Kennel Club recognized purebred dogs, there is an approved breed standard for the Basset Hound. The standard of perfection is a word picture of how the Basset should look, move and behave. All responsible breeders strive to produce dogs that conform to this breed standard. Bassets with serious deviation in appearance, structure, movement and temperament should never be bred. A copy of the standard may be found in several books devoted to the breed, or may be obtained from the BHCA ([http://www.basset-bhca.org/About\\_BHCA/Standard.htm](http://www.basset-bhca.org/About_BHCA/Standard.htm)).

"The American Kennel Club allows altered dogs to participate in obedience, tracking, and junior handling, but not in conformation classes."

## **USEFUL BOOKS AND RESOURCES**

### **Books About the Basset Hound**

- Booth, Robert E. 1999. *The Official Book of the Basset Hound*. T.F. H. Publications, Neptune City, New Jersey.
- Braun, M. 1979. *The New Complete Basset Hound*. Howell, New York.
- Foy, M. & Nicholas, A.K. 1985. *The Basset Hound*. T.F.H. Publications, Neptune City, New Jersey.
- McCarty, D. 1990. *Basset Hounds*. T. F. H. Publications, Neptune City, New Jersey.
- Morgan, D. 1998. *The Basset Hound: Owner's Survival Guide*. T.F. H. Publications, Neptune City, New Jersey.
- Strahlkuppe, J. 1997. *Basset Hounds: A Complete Pet Owner's Manual*. Barrons, Hauppauge, New York.
- Walton, M. 1993. *The New Basset Hound*. Howell, New York.
- Wicklund, B. 1996. *The Basset Hound: An Owner's Guide To A Happy, Healthy Pet*. Howell, New York.

#### **Health Care**

- Carlson, D.G. & Giffin, J.M. 1992. *Dog Owner's Home Veterinary Handbook*. Howell, New York.

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**Discover The Basset Hound!** is published by the  
BHCA Public Education Committee  
*Chardell K. Patrick, Chairman\**

Third printing July 2002  
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**\*This version has been edited for the BHCA Website**