

AKC MEET THE BREEDS®: Miniature Schnauzer

Known for his distinguished, handsome appearance, the Miniature Schnauzer is characterized by its whiskers and double coat, which has a hard, wiry outer coat and close, soft undercoat. Coat colors can be salt and pepper, black and silver and solid black. Despite his small stature, the Miniature Schnauzer can give an alarm just as well as a larger dog. That, combined with his naturally protective nature, makes him an excellent watchdog. He is also the most popular of the three Schnauzer breeds, which include the Giant and the Standard.

A Look Back



Derived from the Standard Schnauzer from Germany, the Miniature was exhibited as a distinct breed as early as 1899. He was originally bred to be a small farm dog, able to go to ground for all kinds of vermin, and is recognizable in German paintings as far back as the 15th century.

Right Breed for You?

Smart, trainable and consistently cheerful, this diminutive breed adapts easily to small city apartments, yet remains just as much at home in the country with lots of space to run around. Their double coat requires hand stripping for the show ring or clipping for the average pet owner, but sheds very little.

If you are considering purchasing a **Miniature Schnauzer puppy**, [learn more here](#).

- Terrier Group; AKC recognized in 1926.
- Ranging in size from 12 to 14 inches tall at the shoulder.
- Farm dog; companion.

© The American Kennel Club, Inc.

Miniature Schnauzer Breed Standard

Terrier Group

General Appearance

The Miniature Schnauzer is a robust, active dog of terrier type, resembling his larger cousin, the Standard Schnauzer, in general appearance, and of an alert, active disposition. **Faults - Type** - Toyishness, ranginess or coarseness.

Size, Proportion, Substance

Size - From 12 to 14 inches. He is sturdily built, nearly square in **proportion** of body length to height with plenty of bone, and without any suggestion of toyishness. **Disqualifications** - Dogs or bitches under 12 inches or over 14 inches.

Head

Eyes - Small, dark brown and deep-set. They are oval in appearance and keen in **expression**. **Faults** - Eyes light and/or large and prominent in appearance. **Ears** - When cropped, the ears are identical in shape and length, with pointed tips. They are in balance with the head and not exaggerated in length. They are set high on the skull and carried perpendicularly at the inner edges, with as little bell as possible along the outer edges. When uncropped, the ears are small and V-shaped, folding close to the skull.

Head strong and rectangular, its width diminishing slightly from ears to eyes, and again to the tip of the nose. The forehead is unwrinkled. The **topskull** is flat and fairly long. The foreface is parallel to the topskull, with a slight stop, and it is at least as long as the topskull. The **muzzle** is strong in proportion to the skull; it ends in a moderately blunt manner, with thick whiskers which accentuate the rectangular shape of the head.

Faults - Head coarse and cheeky. The **teeth** meet in a **scissors bite**. That is, the upper front teeth overlap the lower front teeth in such a manner that the inner surface of the upper incisors barely touches the outer surface of the lower incisors when the mouth is closed. **Faults** - Bite - Undershot or overshot jaw. Level bite.

Neck, Topline, Body

Neck - strong and well arched, blending into the shoulders, and with the skin fitting tightly at the throat.
Body short and deep, with the brisket extending at least to the elbows. Ribs are well sprung and deep, extending well back to a short loin. The underbody does not present a tucked up appearance at the flank. The **backline** is straight; it declines slightly from the withers to the base of the tail. The withers form the highest point of the body. The overall length from chest to buttocks appears to equal the height at the withers. **Faults** - Chest too broad or shallow in brisket. Hollow or roach back.

Tail set high and carried erect. It is docked only long enough to be clearly visible over the backline of the body when the dog is in proper length of coat. **Fault** - Tail set too low.

Forequarters

Forelegs are straight and parallel when viewed from all sides. They have strong pasterns and good bone. They are separated by a fairly deep brisket which precludes a pinched front. The elbows are close, and the ribs spread gradually from the first rib so as to allow space for the elbows to move close to the body. **Fault** - Loose elbows.

The sloping **shoulders** are muscled, yet flat and clean. They are well laid back, so that from the side the tips of the shoulder blades are in a nearly vertical line above the elbow. The tips of the blades are placed closely together. They slope forward and downward at an angulation which permits the maximum forward extension of the forelegs without binding or effort. Both the shoulder blades and upper arms are long, permitting depth of chest at the brisket.

Feet short and round (cat feet) with thick, black pads. The toes are arched and compact.

Hindquarters

The hindquarters have strong-muscled, slanting thighs. They are well bent at the stifles. There is sufficient angulation so that, in stance, the hocks extend beyond the tail. The hindquarters never appear overbuilt or higher than the shoulders. The rear pasterns are short and, in stance, perpendicular to the ground and, when viewed from the rear, are parallel to each other. **Faults** - Sickie hocks, cow hocks, open hocks or bowed hindquarters.

Coat

Double, with hard, wiry, outer coat and close undercoat. The head, neck, ears, chest, tail, and body coat must be plucked. When in show condition, the body coat should be of sufficient length to determine texture. Close covering on neck, ears and skull. Furnishings are fairly thick but not silky. **Faults** - Coat too soft or too smooth and slick in appearance.

Color

The recognized colors are salt and pepper, black and silver and solid black. All colors have uniform skin pigmentation, i.e. no white or pink skin patches shall appear anywhere on the dog.

Salt and Pepper - The typical salt and pepper color of the topcoat results from the combination of black and white banded hairs and solid black and white unbanded hairs, with the banded hairs predominating. Acceptable are all shades of salt and pepper, from light to dark mixtures with tan shadings permissible in the banded or unbanded hair of the topcoat. In salt and pepper dogs, the salt and pepper mixture fades out to light gray or silver white in the eyebrows, whiskers, cheeks, under throat, inside ears, across chest, under tail, leg furnishings, and inside hind legs. It may or may not also fade out on the underbody. However, if so, the lighter underbody hair is not to rise higher on the sides of the body than the front elbows.

Black and Silver - The black and silver generally follows the same pattern as the salt and pepper. The entire salt and pepper section must be black. The black color in the topcoat of the black and silver is a true rich color with black undercoat. The stripped portion is free from any fading or brown tinge and the underbody should be dark.

Black - Black is the only solid color allowed. Ideally, the black color in the topcoat is a true rich glossy solid color with the undercoat being less intense, a soft matting shade of black. This is natural and should not be penalized in any way. The stripped portion is free from any fading or brown tinge. The scissored and clipped areas have lighter shades of black. A small white spot on the chest is permitted, as is an occasional single white hair elsewhere on the body.

Disqualifications - Color solid white or white striping, patching, or spotting on the colored areas of the dog, except for the small white spot permitted on the chest of the black.

The body coat color in salt and pepper and black and silver dogs fades out to light gray or silver white under the throat and across the chest. Between them there exists a natural body coat color. Any irregular or connecting blaze or white mark in this section is considered a white patch on the body, which is also a disqualification.

Gait

The trot is the gait at which movement is judged. When approaching, the forelegs, with elbows close to the body, move straight forward, neither too close nor too far apart. Going away, the hind legs are straight and travel in the same planes as the forelegs.

Note - It is generally accepted that when a full trot is achieved, the rear legs continue to move in the same planes as the forelegs, but a very slight inward inclination will occur. It begins at the point of the shoulder in front and at the hip joint in the rear. Viewed from the front or rear, the legs are straight from these points to the pads. The degree of inward inclination is almost imperceptible in a Miniature Schnauzer that has correct movement. It does not justify moving close, toeing in, crossing, or moving out at the elbows.

Viewed from the side, the forelegs have good reach, while the hind legs have strong drive, with good pickup of hocks. The feet turn neither inward nor outward.

Faults - Single tracking, sidegaiting, paddling in front, or hackney action. Weak rear action.

Temperament

The typical Miniature Schnauzer is alert and spirited, yet obedient to command. He is friendly, intelligent and willing to please. He should never be overaggressive or timid.

Disqualifications

Dogs or bitches under 12 inches or over 14 inches.

Color solid white or white striping, patching, or spotting on the colored areas of the dog, except for the small white spot permitted on the chest of the black. The body coat color in salt and pepper and black and silver dogs fades out to light gray or silver white under the throat and across the chest. Between them there exists a natural body coat color. Any irregular or connecting blaze or white mark in this section is considered a white patch on the body, which is also a disqualification.

Approved January 15, 1991

Effective February 27, 1991

Miniature Schnauzer Links

[Colors and Markings](#) | [Did You Know?](#) | [History](#) | [Photos](#) | [Puppies](#) | [Shop For Your Breed](#) | [Video](#)

- The Schnauzer is of German origin, said to be recognizable in pictures of the 15th century.
- The Miniature Schnauzer is derived from the Standard Schnauzer and is said to have come from mixing of Affenpinschers and Poodles with small Standard Schnauzers. The breed was exhibited as a distinct breed as early as 1899.
- The Miniature Schnauzer was originally bred to be a small farm dog, able to go to ground for all kinds of vermin.

Miniature Schnauzer History

 The Schnauzer is of German origin, said to be recognizable in pictures of the 15th century.

The Miniature Schnauzer is derived from the Standard Schnauzer and is said to have come from mixing of Affenpinschers and Poodles with small Standards. The Miniature Schnauzer was exhibited as a distinct breed as early as 1899.

Today's Miniature Schnauzer in the United States is an elegant dog of the Terrier Group. While the breed resembles other dogs in this group, almost all of which were bred in the British Isles to "go to ground" to attack vermin of all kinds, his origin and blood are quite different, giving the Miniature Schnauzer a naturally happy temperament.

The breed is characterized by its stocky build, wiry coat, and abundant whiskers and leg furnishings. A Miniature Schnauzer may be of several colors with salt-and-pepper (gray) being the most common, although blacks and black-and-silvers are now seen in increasing numbers. The salt-and-pepper color is the result of unique light and dark banding of each hair instead of mixing of light and dark hairs. The correct coat can be retained only by stripping and is lost when the coat is clipped. The breed has a soft undercoat which can range from black and dark gray, to very light gray, or beige. If the animal is clipped, in time only the undercoat will remain.

The breed is hardy, healthy, intelligent, and fond of children. It was developed as a small farm dog, used as a ratter. His size (12-14 inches at the withers) has permitted him to adapt easily to small city quarters. On the other hand, he is still at home in the country and can cover a substantial amount of ground without tiring. As a rule a Miniature Schnauzer is not a fighter, although he will stand up for himself if necessary.

The Miniature Schnauzer is now viewed primarily as a charming and attractive companion. He is seldom addicted to wandering. He is devoted to his home and family, and functions very well as a guard dog in that he can give an alarm as well as a larger dog. His good health, good temperament, and attractive appearance combine to fit him admirably for his role as family pet.

Miniature Schnauzers have been bred in the United States since 1925 and have gained steadily in popular favor. The American Miniature Schnauzer Club began its independent operation in August 1933.