

The Best Dog Breeds for Apartments

Think you can't get a puppy because you live in an apartment? Think again! Not every dog needs a yard to run around in. There are many breeds that are well-suited to life in small spaces. To help you choose the breed that's right for your lifestyle, we've compiled a list of the top 5 best puppies for apartments.



1. Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

Named for King Charles II of England, who was known to prioritize his beloved dogs over matters of state, the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is the quintessential lap dog. Thanks to King Charles's devotion, these sweet-natured dogs became very popular with England's nobility in the 1700s.

The Cavalier's most distinctive feature is their gentle disposition. They are very affectionate and are happiest when around their family members. They are most likely to be found sitting comfortably on your lap or following you around the house. Their attachment to family can cause problems, however - cavaliers prefer not to be left alone and may suffer from separation anxiety when family members are not present. In addition to being gentle, these adorable dogs are also even-tempered, friendly, and very intelligent.

Cavaliers can reach 12 to 13 inches tall (measured at the shoulder) and weigh from 13 to 18 pounds on average. They come in four different colors: Blenheim, tricolor, black & tan, and ruby. Cavaliers adapt very well to small spaces, which makes them an excellent puppy for apartment living. Due to their friendly nature, they rarely bark, which is another point in their favor.

Cavaliers do need some exercise but should be satisfied with one or two short walks per day. With their long, luxurious coats, they require regular grooming. You should comb and brush them several times a week – daily, if possible. Their ears, especially, can become tangled and matted easily. You should also be prepared to clean up a bit of fur around the house, as they do shed.

The lifespan of the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel ranges from 9 to 15 years. Cavaliers tend to suffer from a genetic heart malfunction called Mitral Valve Disease. More than half of all Cavaliers will develop this condition by the time they are 5 years old. Virtually all Cavaliers develop it by the age of 10.

2. Boston Terrier

Thanks to their gentle disposition and their tuxedo-like coloring, Boston Terriers have earned the nickname the “American Gentleman.” These amiable little dogs were originally bred for fighting more than a century ago, but they’ve come a long way since then. Your Boston Terrier is more likely to be found snuggling than fighting these days.

Boston Terriers can be easily identified by their black and white fur, short noses, and large upright ears. They can reach 12 to 15 inches in height. Boston Terriers have a sturdy and well-proportioned frame. Their weight ranges from 10 to 25 pounds, depending on which of the three weight classes your puppy is from.

Boston Terriers are extremely intelligent. Thanks to this trait, they are easily trained. They are also affectionate and even-tempered, which makes them an excellent companion dog. They are a good choice for an apartment dog because of their compact size, friendliness, and trainability.

Most of the Boston Terrier’s exercise needs can be met indoors. They can have excessive energy at times, however, and would most certainly not hesitate to take a walk with you. Boston Terriers have a smooth coat which means they’re a relatively low-maintenance dog.

The lifespan of Boston Terriers runs from approximately 13 to 15 years old. Because of their protruding eyes, they often develop eye problems such as cataracts or corneal ulcers. They also can have respiratory difficulty and an intolerance to extreme temperatures because of their short noses.

3. Shih Tzu

An elegant looking dog with long silky fur, Shih Tzus have an extremely appealing personality. Their name (pronounced *sheet-zoo*) means “lion dog” in Chinese but their personality is anything but ferocious. These docile dogs were bred to be companions to royalty during the Ming Dynasty.

Shih Tzus are affectionate, docile, and friendly dogs. They are also very adaptable; they can thrive in a city apartment, in the suburbs, or even on a farm in the country. They don’t care where they live, as long as there’s a comfortable lap to curl up on.

The Shih Tzu’s exercise needs are minimal so they will be happy simply padding around at home and playing with their toys. This makes them excellent apartment dogs. They also rarely bark, which your neighbors will appreciate. They do have a bit of a stubborn streak, however, so they can be somewhat difficult to housebreak.

If you choose to adopt a Shih Tzu, you should be prepared for the maintenance that comes with caring for a long-haired dog. Their fur mats easily and needs to be brushed daily to prevent tangles. Some Shih Tzu parents choose to have them groomed regularly, which will need to be done every 6 to 8 weeks.

Shih Tzus are on the small size, ranging in height from 9 to 10 inches tall. They should only reach a weight of approximately 9 to 16 pounds. They have a distinctive under bite that can cause issues such as misaligned teeth and retained puppy teeth. The lifespan of the Shih Tzu can be anywhere from 10 to 16 years long.

4. Dachshund

The only dog on our list who's not in the companion dog class, these hounds were bred to be hunters. Dachshund means "badger dog" in German. With their long bodies, short legs, and strong paws, dachshunds are perfectly suited to dig and tunnel in search of badgers. And their compact size means they'll fit into any home, no matter how small.

Dachshunds will only reach a height of 8 to 9 inches, making them the shortest dog on our list. In the United States, dachshunds come in two different sizes. The smaller variety, or miniature dachshund, will weigh 11 pounds or less as an adult. Standard dachshunds will eventually reach a weight somewhere between 16 and 32 pounds.

The dachshund coat comes in three varieties: smooth (or shorthaired), longhaired, and wirehaired. There are several colors and patterns available including red, black & tan, chocolate, piebald, dapple, and English cream. Grooming needs vary depending on which coat your dachshund has. Shorthaired dachshunds shed very little and are easy to maintain whereas the longhaired varieties require regular brushing.

Since the 1950s, dachshunds have consistently been recognized as one of the most popular dog breeds in the country. They are lively, playful, and intelligent. Dachshunds are loyal companions and are good with children. They are also very courageous, despite their size, which makes them a decent guard dog. They may not scare off intruders with their size, but their loud barking might just do the trick.

Bred to be tenacious, your dachshund will want to spend a lot of time hunting his toys. They definitely appreciate taking walks but with their small size, they can get most of their exercise needs met indoors. The lifespan of dachshunds is 12 to 15 years on average. Because of their long bodies, they are prone to back problems.

5. Pug

Easily identified by their distinctive comical face, pugs are funny, affectionate, and low-maintenance. These mischievous clowns love to be the center of attention. Originating in China, pugs were specifically bred to be lap dogs, so they thrive on human affection.

Pugs are charming, playful, and sociable, which makes them excellent companions. They don't do well when left alone, however, so be prepared to have a shadow following you around the house. Because of their devotion, pugs can become jealous when there's more than one pet in the household. Early socialization can help prevent this conflict.

Though fawn-colored pugs are by far the most common, you can also find them with black or silver fur. Pugs will reach a height of 10 to 12 inches and weigh 14 to 18 pounds by adulthood. Pugs are double coated so they shed quite a lot for a dog with a short coat. Make sure you have a heavy-duty vacuum cleaner on hand, especially in the summer when their shedding is more prolific.

A pug's exercise needs are easily met. In fact, pugs have a tendency to be sedentary and may show very little interest in playing fetch. They don't bark much, which is another reason they'd make an excellent roommate. They do have a tendency to snort and snore due to their short noses, but that won't bother the neighbors.

Pugs, unfortunately, tend to develop some pretty serious health issues in old age. They are prone to epilepsy, encephalitis, and nerve degeneration. The lifespan of the pug is an average of 12 to 15 years.

Small Spaces, Big Hearts: Choosing the Perfect Apartment Dog

Living in small space shouldn't stop you from adopting a puppy. Not all dogs dream of running freely in an expansive backyard. There are breeds that can thrive in an apartment. The best puppies for apartments are those that are relatively small with easy temperaments and low exercise requirements. So go find the puppy that's perfect for you. You and your furry companion can spend many happy years together.