

The English Setter - A Large, Friendly Setter

English Setters have a unique mottled coat and are one of several breeds classed as setters. Setters are a product of pointers, bred several hundred years ago. Over the intervening decades, several distinct lines have emerged, including the English Setter.

The early English Setters were bred for their hunting ability. The unique point about these dogs is their natural tendency (enhanced with training) to simply sit and stare whenever they find the game they were seeking.

English Setters are slender dogs, though they do tend to gain weight easily if overfed or not given enough opportunity for exercise. The coat is white but has speckles of several colors. Some range to a gray color that looks almost blue while others are various shades of brown, ranging from darker brown to a pale yellow (usually called lemon). A combination of more than one color for the speckles does occur, though not nearly so often as a single color. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to the color patterns, though spots tend to be small rather than creating large patches of color on the white coat. The coat tends to be short, but with a long "fringe" that drapes down from the tail. The chest hair is also longer than that on the rest of this dog's body.

As a rule, these dogs are extremely gentle. The English Setter is a larger dog - healthy males may weigh 75 pounds or more. Even the smaller dogs of the breed will weigh in the 50-pound range. Despite their size, these dogs love affection and are quite ready to curl up for an afternoon nap with his people.

Many families have adopted them as indoor pets. They adapt well to living indoors despite their breeding as hunting dogs, but they do tend to be rather lazy while inside. To be sure the English Setter doesn't become overly lazy and overweight, he needs plenty of opportunity to get outdoors where he'll be more likely to run and play.

One of the important facts about the English Setter is that it tends to bark a lot. That makes it less ideal for crowded neighborhoods with neighbors that might be bothered by the barking. These dogs can be trained not to bark, or at least to bark less often, but it takes patience and time to accomplish this feat. The jowls of this dog make it a drooler as well, but to a lesser degree than breeds such as the Boxer.

The English Setter may be called the Laverack Setter or the Llewellyn Setter for two of the earliest breeders. One of the people instrumental in bringing the breed to its current status was a nobleman named Laverack. Two of the most famous lines of English Setters derive from Laverack's kennels and those of another Englishman named Llewellyn.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

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