

The Briard

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Background

The Briard is referenced as far back as 8th century France where he was bred as a herding dog and guard dog. He protected his property and his livestock from wolves and poachers by keeping them within their pastures. He also accompanied hunters to track and hunt game, acted as a watchdog during war times, and was used to carry items as a pack dog.

The Briard was recognized by the American Kennel Club in 1928.

Sizing up

- Weight: 70 to 90 lbs.
- Height: 22 to 27 inches
- Coat: Double with a dense undercoat. Long, coarse, and wavy topcoat
- Color: Black, gray, tawny, black and gray, black and tawny, tawny and gray
- Life expectancy: 10 to 12 years

What's the Briard like?

The Briard is an active dog and loves to take nice long walks or have play session with his family. The independent Briard enjoys keeping busy and will do so with or without you alongside him. He may like to march to the beat of his own drum but he needs affection from you probably more than you need it from him. When you're not out jogging or playing fetch you can expect to see him curled up in the living room with his favorite people.

The Briard has a great memory so training should be slightly easier than with most breeds, but always start the [training](#) and [socializing](#) processes early. He is very caring and protective of his family but he needs to learn socialization early or he can be cautious around strangers. Use a stern yet calm voice and always provide positive reinforcement when he's done something correctly.

Grooming a Briard might not be a walk in the park (which he would love by the way) but he looks so cute after a good brushing! His coat can mat very easily and, depending on the length of his fur, you'll want to give it a hefty brushing at least every other day to keep him tangle-free. You can't forget his beard! You'll need to brush it as needed-- you may find the leftovers after he eats.

Health

The Briard is generally a healthy breed but you should be aware of some concerns:

Progressive retinal atrophy

- An eye condition that worsens over time and could lead to a loss of vision

Congenital night blindness

- A genetic eye disorder, seen in Briards and people, affects a part of the retina causing impaired night vision and it can eventually lead to blindness

Panosteitis

- A condition common in medium-large sized dogs that affects the bones in their legs causing a painful limping and is usually seen around 5 to 18 months of age.

Cutaneous lymphoma

- A type malignant lymphoma, one of the most common tumors seen in dogs, occurs in the skin resulting in agitating, itchy, red bumps.

Hemangiosarcoma (HSA)

- A malignant cancer of the blood vessels that can be aggressive and often result in a collapse due to internal bleeding

[Von Willebrand's disease](#)

- A hereditary disease caused by a lack of an adhesive glycoprotein in the blood that is needed to prevent blood clots.

[Hypothyroidism](#)

- A disease caused by an increase in metabolism by producing an excess amount of a thyroid hormone.

Takeaway Points

- The Briard is on the high maintenance side when it comes to grooming.
- The Briard is an excellent watchdog.
- The Briard would be a great companion for anyone who loves outdoor activities.
- The Briard is great with kids.