

Getting to Know Cavaliers by Cathy Lambert

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What you are viewing is a random sample from the book aimed at showing you the quality and the depth of detail that you can expect from the rest of the eBook. Please take the time to look through the 'Table of Contents'. You will see that we have covered just about everything you could want to know about choosing and owning a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. Learn how to locate a reputable breeder, choose a healthy puppy, and provide on-going care for your new companion.

Getting to Know Cavaliers is over 165 pages filled with easy reading current information with over 200 colour images and embedded video files. An extensive list of on-line resources is provided for further reading.

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Getting to Know **Cavaliers**

A Guide to Choosing and Owning a
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

CATHY LAMBERT

*Animal*info

Publications

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By 1945, the Kennel Club of Great Britain recognised the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel as a breed in its own right. In 1956, a national breed club was formed in USA. However, it wasn't until 1996, that Cavaliers gained full breed recognition with the American Kennel Club.



'The Cavalier Pets' by Sir Edwin Landseer



The Modern Day Cavalier – a return to the 'older type' dogs with longer snouts as featured in Sir Edwin Landseer's painting.

Tricolour - Black and white markings with tan above the eyes (like eye-brows), on the cheeks, inside the ears, inside legs and on the underside of the tail.



Tricolour male, 'Australian Champion Lilacdale Sugar Cane'

Black & Tan - Black with tan markings over the eyes, on the cheeks, inside the ears, on the chest, legs and on the underside of the tail.

*Right - Black and Tan Male,
'Norwegian Champion Aimabel's
Swarzenegger'
Photo – Nordåstoppen Cavaliers*



*Left – 'Sømaan's Black Ronja O'Heartbreak'
Photo – Nordåstoppen Cavaliers*

The Ideal Owner



Are you ready to bring a dog into your family?

Assessing Your Own Situation

First and foremost - dogs cost money! I am not referring to the purchase price only but also the cost of good food, vaccinations, wormers, fencing, housing, not to mention the multitude of incidental accessories that are now available, or the costs of emergency visits to the vet. If you think you need to be unlucky for your dog to require a vet visit then ask yourself how many times you have needed to go to the doctor yourself in the past ten to fifteen years. It happens. They are no different from us in that regard. Ask yourself if you could stand to see your dog suffer if it needed attention just because you couldn't afford a visit to the vet. Just for good measure, they always get sick on a weekend when it costs more to visit the vet!

Next - dogs need exercise! Not all dogs have the same requirement for exercise,



*Dogs love and need to exercise.
Photo – Lyngroen Cavaliers*

but like humans, no exercise at all is going to lead to poor health issues. A game in the backyard or going for a walk is not only good exercise, but provides your dog with companionship, some mental stimulation and breaks the boredom of the day. Boredom leads to behavioural problems regardless of the size and activity level of the breed. You need to be sure that you have the time and inclination to spend some time out of the house with your dog.

new owner does not provide the correct diet and health care to maximise the pup's growth and development.



'Bowhouse Aim For Justice' - (Jury)
Puppies can change dramatically as they grow, so breeders can never guarantee that a promising puppy will become a champion.

their Cavaliers going through their paces. Although there will be breeders amongst the members there will also be many owners who can recommend or warn against breeders they have dealt with. Breeders who provide good service and have a good reputation will come highly recommended. In addition some clubs have instigated breed surveys and tests that breeding animals are required to pass. These tests are designed to improve the health and temperament of the breed. Most breed clubs can be located through the major Kennel Councils. Links are provided in the 'Resources' section (page - 157).

It is best to try and locate a number of breeders so that you can get some different perspective on the breed you are contemplating buying. Often breeders may contradict each other, which may indicate that more research on a particular aspect of the breed is in order. It is important to look at how a breeder relates to their dogs, and to you. A good breeder will be interested in how their dog develops and will be looking for owners who will provide a good home for the life of the dog. Choose a breeder that you can build a rapport with. They should be happy to help you if you have any concerns about the health and development of your dog. Good breeders will often have waiting lists for their puppies and may not need to advertise for business.

Breed specific clubs will often have social events or training days where you can speak with members, and watch



It is important to look at how a breeder relates to their dogs



*Tri-colour puppies from Elzmere Cavaliers
If you are interested in showing your Cavalier it is best to choose a
confident, responsive puppy.*

Some breeders may require new owners to sign contracts which outline the conditions of sale and any non-breeding or showing clauses that they require the new owner to abide by. They differ from breeder to breeder so the only advice I can give is that you ask for a copy of the contract in advance and make sure that you read it thoroughly and are happy with the conditions before signing it and collecting the puppy. A good breeder will care about where their puppies are going to end up so be prepared to answer their questions honestly. They know the breed better than you do so they may save you from making a serious mistake.

A good breeder should be aware of any genetic disorders that the breed suffers from, and will have had their breeders tested if possible. This testing will differ depending on the disorder, but may include things such as x-rays, physical examinations or blood tests. Some genetic tests are not readily available all over the world so if the breeder has not had the opportunity to test their dogs they should at least make you aware of this fact and that the disorder may be a problem with the breed. A breeder who is unaware of the disorders that are a potential problem in their breed should be avoided. They are either not a good breeder or are perhaps trying to deceive you. Please make sure you question the breeder thoroughly regarding all of the diseases I have listed in the following section '*Available Health Screening*'.

position, an experienced vet or breeder can often feel the presence of both testicles before they descend but this is no guarantee that they will drop at the appropriate time.

In reality puppies often choose their owners despite our best efforts to be logical and objective about our decision, but it is best to try and be realistic in your choice, as the wrong decision can be devastating and costly in the long run.



In reality puppies often choose their owners despite our best efforts to be logical and objective about our decision.



You need to know where your puppy is going to sleep.

You need to know where the puppy is going to sleep. Consistency is extremely important with dogs. If you don't intend to allow your dog to be in the house, then don't begin by allowing the pup to sleep inside. Forcing the pup outside after it has become accustomed to sleeping inside will be confusing for the puppy. If the pup is not used to being outside, forcing it to be outside on its first night can also cause distress. Try and find a compromise such as

placing the pup's bedding in a laundry area that has outside access but also prevents the pup from feeling totally isolated from the family. However, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, Cavaliers won't be happy being outside at night. They will prefer to be on your bed, but will do fine in a cosy nest of their own somewhere else in the house.

It is crucial that the pup is held in a secure area so that it cannot get out onto the street or come to harm in any other way, such as falling into a pool or gaining access to potentially aggressive dogs next door. Pups are small and flexible and have a knack of being able to get under gates and through gaps in fences.

The First Days

Pups will often cry on their first night away from their mother and while this can make sleep for their new owners difficult, it usually doesn't last too long. After they have had their last feed they should



Pups love to explore! Make sure they can't get into potentially harmful situations.

check the yard itself for potential threats. These include making sure that your puppy can't drown in the backyard pool, or knock over large objects that it may crash into when playing. You should also make sure that there is no access to potentially toxic products that may be kept in the garden shed such as snail pellets, rodent bait, engine coolant, and fertiliser.

The desire to chew and swallow inappropriate objects is also a concern. Electrical



The desire to chew and swallow inappropriate objects is also a concern

cords should be kept out of reach both inside and outside the house. Small objects and toys that are too small for the type of pup you have may be swallowed and result in a bowel obstruction or cause the puppy to choke. Make sure that the toys provided are robust enough to withstand chewing so that they don't break into pieces small enough to swallow.

Hazards associated with the environment such as poisonous snakes, spiders, paralysis ticks, and poisonous toads may vary according to where you live. Your vet or state kennel council can advise you on things that may pose a threat in your area. They are just like children in many ways and therefore a commonsense approach is required. You wouldn't leave a child in a hot car and the same applies to dogs. A couple of days of close observation will help you identify potential hazards. Rather than becoming alarmed or paranoid about your puppy's safety, simply be aware of what your pup is doing when it is awake and playing.



Make sure that the toys provided are robust enough to withstand chewing so that they don't break into pieces small enough to swallow.

treat when it complies, it will give up trying to avoid obeying. On the other hand if it occasionally gets away with disobeying the command, it will continue to try its luck in avoiding the command each time it is given.

Dogs enjoy routine. It gives them a sense of security knowing when they will be fed, when they will be let out for a toilet break, and when they will go for a walk. Dogs need to know where they sleep, where they are allowed to go, and what belongs to them in terms of bedding, toys and food dishes. The sooner you establish a routine the sooner the dog will settle down and feel more relaxed. You must be aware that your routine may differ from what the dog was used to in its previous home so be patient and understanding. If you experience behaviours that you do not understand and are unsure of how to deal with, I suggest contacting a reputable dog behaviourist in your area. These trained professionals can often resolve an issue quickly and easily before it becomes a serious problem.



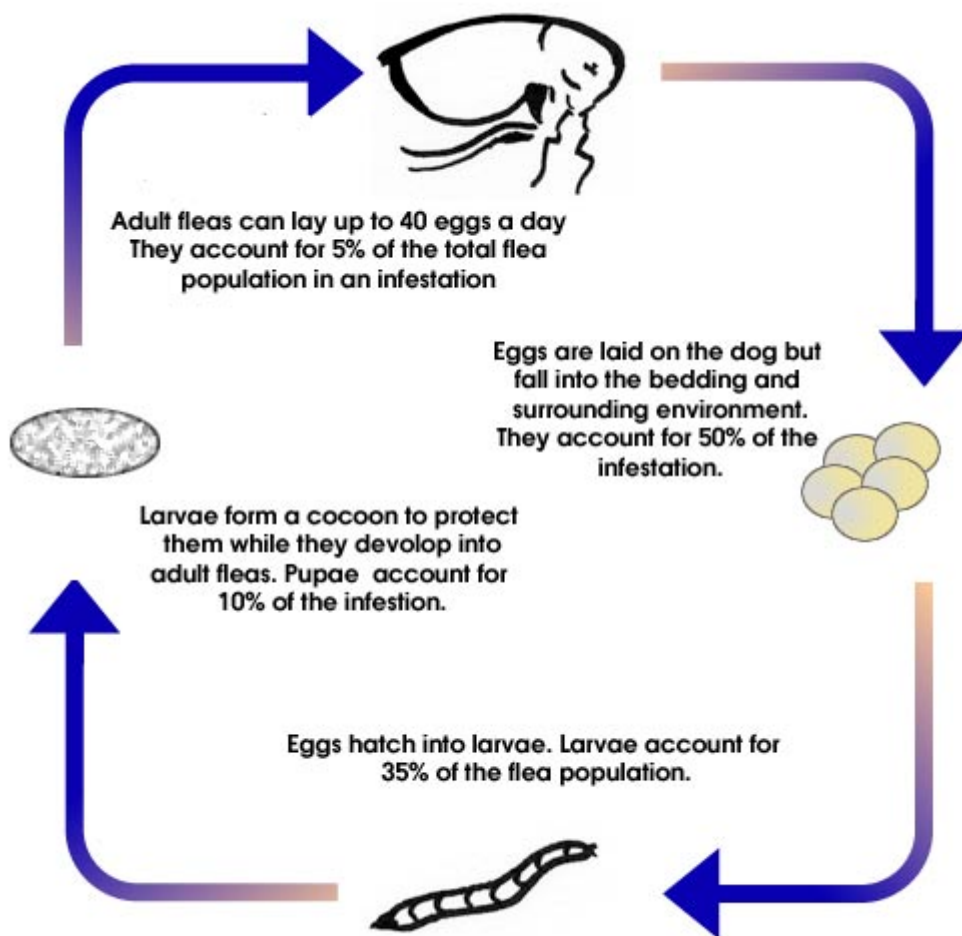
Dogs become confident and comfortable when they know their position in the pack.

Adopting an Older Dog

Apart from the issues already discussed, taking on an older dog may involve a few more things that you need to consider. The old saying “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks” has some basis in fact. Their ability to adapt to new household rules is

correctly – ALWAYS follow the directions and keep them safely stored away from your pets and children. Never use products designed for use on cats – dogs and cats react very differently to chemicals. Never use insecticides that are out of date, as they can become very toxic. Signs of insecticide poisoning can include salivation, depression, laboured breathing, muscle spasms, weakness and convulsions. Always take extra care when treating young pups, pregnant dogs or debilitated or elderly dogs and observe your dog closely after treatment. Consult your vet and follow their advice if you suspect poisoning.

FLEA LIFE CYCLE



Flea treatment/control products are generally grouped as follows;

Collars:

The most effective of these contain Insect Growth Regulators (IGR) - these produce a hormone that prevents fleas from developing into adults capable of reproduction. They will not kill adult fleas but are effective in interfering with the life cycle of fleas. Flea collars are not effective when used alone.

Topical Flea Adulticides:

These products are applied as a small pre-measured dose to the skin in an area that the dog cannot reach, such as between the shoulders at the base of the neck. They

Wire Pin Brushes

These are useful for removing dead undercoat, particularly when moulting.

Pin Brushes come in a variety of pin lengths. The pins on good quality pin brushes are polished to avoid scratching the skin.



Coat King™ Grooming Rake or Blade Rake

Also known as 'mat breakers', these are designed to help break up hair mats so that they can be more easily removed, and also to remove dead hair from the undercoat. The blades (which may be replaceable) lie side by side, and when pulled through the coat, run in the same direction as the natural fall of the hair. In this way, the blades don't interfere with the topcoat as they pass through, but cut and remove any hairs of the undercoat that are lying out of place.



Coat King™ grooming rakes above, also referred to as 'mat breakers' are used for breaking up large mats and removing dead hair

Slicker Brushes

These have short fine metal teeth that are useful in teasing out mats. The idea is to break up mats that involve the outer coat first before tackling mats that are close to the skin involving the undercoat.

Combs

Generally used after brushing to remove more dead and loose hair, but also to work out tangles identified during brushing. Many have wider pins at one end and closer

oil. Make sure the water is not too hot (lukewarm is best) and it is important to be thorough in rinsing the soap out of the dog's coat. Soap left in the coat may cause skin irritations.

Instinctively, your dog will shake vigorously to remove excess water from its coat which usually leaves the handler almost as wet as the dog. The drying process can be sped up by towelling the dog, a process which most dogs seem to derive a great deal of pleasure from. Rub the towel along the dog's body with the grain of the coat to remove excess water, and then rub vigorously against the grain

to help remove more water, being careful not to create too many tangles. It is best to comb out tangles while the coat is still wet, and then use a brush to finish off. If you have a little extra time, a blow dryer can also be used on low heat and is particularly effective in lifting and fluffing the coat. As Cavaliers are small dogs, this shouldn't take very long, and it gives the coat a great finish. It is important to remember that once the undercoat is wet it may take a long time to dry fully without assistance.



Once the undercoat is wet it may take a long time to dry fully without using a blow dryer on low heat



Dogs can become very cold unless they have somewhere warm to dry off. Exercising your dog while it dries is a good way to keep it warm, but you need to be ready to stop it rolling in the dirt as this is instinctive behaviour for a wet dog.

*'Australian Champion
Cavtan Brockmanrising'
(Brock) being prepared for
a show*

Cavalier Health Issues



Just as humans suffer from a seemingly infinite number of health problems, so too do dogs. However, instead of rewriting the veterinary journals here, I have included a list of those health problems which are most specific to Cavaliers, and which are most important for you, as an owner or potential buyer, to know about. Some of the problems can be very serious but you should remember that they are 'potential' problems only, and that the risk of your dog developing them can be reduced dramatically by being careful where you obtain your dog from, and by also providing the right diet and exercise.

Many of the following health issues are genetic and can be selectively bred out by reputable breeders. Many breeders will also offer a warranty of some kind against



Purchasing a healthy puppy from a reputable breeder can help ensure that you will have a long and happy relationship with your dog.

one of their puppies developing some of these disorders. However, although the warranty may offer you some sort of compensation, such as a refund of purchase price, it won't change the fact that the puppy will have become a loved member of your family, and may now have to cope with an uncomfortable and possibly shortened life. Research and health screenings are therefore an important part in the process of purchasing a puppy, so you can ensure to the



Activity and puzzle toys may help to keep your dog busy and quiet while you are away from home.



Remember, some squeaky toys can be as annoying to neighbours as barking.

a better choice. It is important to make sure that toys are the appropriate size for your dog so they are not at risk from choking while you are away. Getting them used to being outside on their own while you are home can avoid separation anxiety and help them relax while you are away. They should be provided with a comfortable, secure area to spend the day. The company of another dog may also help. Dogs can play together for long periods and the security of having another dog around can help those that bark as a result of separation anxiety. You must be aware, however, that two dogs can mean 'double trouble', particularly where the problem is alarm barking. It is natural pack behaviour for dogs to join in the defence of their territory.

It is important not to reward inappropriate barking. While it may be acceptable for dogs to bark to alert their owners to the arrival of strangers, it should be stopped quickly before the dog (or the neighbour) becomes too agitated. Other incidences of barking should be ignored. Acknowledging your dog's barking, even by approaching it to try and stop the barking, can reward and reinforce the behaviour. Many barking problems can be corrected through training but some problems may be more difficult and may require the assistance of an animal behaviourist. To be able to correct the problem, it is