

Congratulations on Your New English Springer Spaniel!

The English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association, the official recognized parent club of the English Springer Spaniel, welcomes you to Springer ownership. In this brochure, you will read excerpts from our web site as well as some tips to help make your years together rewarding and fun. Visit us online at www.essfta.org for more information on any of the topics in this brochure and so much more!



History

The Spaniel may have originated in Spain and was mentioned by name in an ancient law in Britain as early as 300 AD. In the 19th and early 20th century in Britain, smaller Spaniels in the same litter would be used to hunt woodcock; they were called "Cockers." Larger littermates, used to flush (or "spring") game, were called "Springers." The first English Springer Spaniel in North America was imported from England to Canada in 1913.



Photo by David Williams

"Dual type" Springers - those capable of competing in both conformation and field trial competition - became a part of history by the early 1940's, when the last dual championship was earned. Field trial enthusiasts continued selecting those qualities in their dogs which produced top caliber performance, while the show-minded endeavored just as earnestly to breed dogs

consistent with the breed's written standard, successful as conformation competitors. The different emphasis in these venues and the high level of competition make titling in both unlikely.

The true beauty of the English Springer Spaniel can be found in its original purpose, that of a companion gundog. The diverse appearance of today's show and field bred Springers is due to specialization and to the choices breeders make to achieve success in their endeavors. Competitive field trial Springers are the ultimate in athleticism and performance. Competitive conformation Springers are breathtaking examples of breed type, soundness, and symmetry.

Description

The English Springer Spaniel has long drooping ears, a moderately long coat, a happily wagging tail, and a talent for flushing (or "springing") birds. At maturity, females are around 19" tall at the shoulders, and weigh about 40 lbs., and males around 20", weighing about 50 lbs. They may be black and white, liver and white, or either combination with tan points (tri-colored), with or without ticking (freckles). The typical Springer is friendly, eager to please, quick to learn and willing to obey. Such traits



*The late CH Salilyn's Condor
Photo by John Ashby*

traits are essential for appropriate handler control in the field. In the show ring, he should exhibit poise and attentiveness and permit himself to be examined by the judge without resentment or cringing. Aggression toward people and aggression toward other dogs is not in keeping with sporting dog character and purpose and is not acceptable.

For a complete copy of the official Standard, visit the ESSFTA web site: www.essfta.org/standard.htm

Springers are cheerful and affectionate, generally good with children and noisy with intruders. However, they make friends in a hurry and don't make good guard dogs. They are "reactors," but most don't bark without a reason. Most English Springers make excellent house pets; energy levels range from high to laid-back depending on the individual's personality and life stage.



Photo by Henriette Schmidt

Care of Your Springer

- Springers love their people and can sometimes be classified as "Velcro" dogs that like to stick to their owners. They are unhappy when shut out, tied out, or isolated.
- They thrive on socialization and positive training: without it, they can become pushy and obnoxious.
- Springers need regular exercise. A securely fenced yard and an assortment of toys or a ball to fetch will keep your dog amused and out of trouble. Concentrated running should be saved for the mature dog. They are over two before their bones are hard enough to join your work-out.
- Crate training your puppy can provide it a place to sleep, aid in housebreaking, and keep it safe in the car.
- All floppy-eared dogs need regular ear-care. Preventative maintenance can often save expensive vet visits.
- Plan to visit your veterinarian promptly after acquiring your English Springer Spaniel. Talk to your breeder and your vet about the best choices of food and about vaccination and worming schedules.
- Keep plenty of fresh water available, and change the water several times a day.
- Reputable breeders are genuinely concerned about the well being of the puppies and dogs they produce. They are an excellent source of information on the care and upbringing of your dog.
- Be a responsible dog owner. Spay or neuter your pet Springer. This not only eliminates the problem of a surprise litter, but it can reduce your pet's chance of later problems like mammary tumors as well as other forms of cancers in both males and females.
- Springers require a certain amount of grooming and trimming to control shedding and keep their coats neat and free of mats. Brush your dog weekly, and attend to nails and ears regularly. Locate a professional groomer to help maintain your dog in top condition, or you may enjoy learning to groom your own dog.

Health and Heredity

The health and well being of your English Springer Spaniel will be among your major concerns. Their average lifespan is about twelve years. While most English Springer Spaniels lead healthy, happy lives and retain their vigor into old age, genetic-based disorders are not uncommon.

You should develop a basic understanding of the hereditary and health challenges of English Springer Spaniels. Most hereditary disorders are not life threatening and can be managed. However, some can cause pain and suffering to the dog and expense and emotional distress to the owner. Even the best breeding program and the soundest breeding stock can produce dogs with hereditary disorders or health problems. English Springer breeders have collected DNA samples from over 1000 dogs in order to identify and minimize genetically based problems.

Take the time to learn all you can about the health of your Springer; an important step toward a long, rewarding and healthy relationship. For more information about this subject, go to the ESSFTA Health and Research page at www.essfta.org/essfta/health_research.htm

Breeding

Breeding is not a "right;" it is a choice and a major responsibility. The English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association has published, and actively promotes, guidelines for responsible breeders of Springers. Go to



Photo by Jan Martin

www.essfta.org/essfta/breedersguidelines.htm or *The Spaniel Manual* for the full text. **Key points include:**

- Before breeding a litter, commit to study the breed thoroughly in order to understand the qualities intrinsic to its character. Acquire a foundation in genetics and knowledge of the heritable defects that most commonly challenge the breed along with their modes of inheritance (where known).
- The ESSFTA recommends a minimum breeding age of three years of age.
- Use for breeding only individuals of proven quality that have passed recommended health checks—at a minimum, hips, eyes, and tests for PFK (phosphofructokinase, an enzyme deficiency)—in order to maintain a high quality gene pool for the future.
- Carefully screen and evaluate puppies prior to placement with responsible owners that will socialize and care for them well. Represent puppies and their pedigrees honestly to potential buyers.
- Accept ongoing responsibility for all puppies produced and take back or assist in relocation if a buyer can no longer keep a dog.

Games Springers Play

You'll find a number of "jobs" and competitive opportunities available to you and your Springer. Consider classes or training opportunities for:

Hunting	Obedience
AKC Hunting Tests	Canine Good Citizen program
Spaniel Field Trials	Therapy
Conformation Shows	Search & Rescue
Agility	Flyball
Tracking	ESSFTA Working Dog Program

The trainability required for a Springer to excel as a hunter makes the breed a standout in other performance events. Springers from most any background can enjoy many of the activities listed. Training for any of these areas will enhance the bond with your dog and help him/her become a well-adjusted member of society, and more of a pleasure for you to live with too!

Every year the AKC reports that Springers have earned hundreds of titles in these events. All AKC competitive venues with the exception of conformation shows are open to spayed or neutered dogs as well as dogs with an AKC limited (non-breeding) registration. Browse the Versatility section of



Photo by Tien Tran Photography

the ESSFTA Web site for more dogs as well as dogs with an AKC limited (non-breeding) registration. Browse the Versatility section of the ESSFTA Web site for more complete information on these activities. For rules and regulations and other information governing AKC dog sports, visit www.akc.org/events or write the American Kennel Club (AKC), 8051 Arco Corporate Drive, Suite 100, Raleigh, NC 27617-3390.

For Flyball information contact: North American Flyball Association, Inc., 1400 W. Devon Ave #512, Chicago, IL 60660.

For Therapy Dog information, contact: THERAPY DOGS, INC. P.O. Box 5868, Cheyenne, WY 82003, Phone: 307-432-0272.

The ESSFTA Foundation

The English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Assn. Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit charitable corporation formed to promote and provide financial and other support for individuals and organizations focusing charitable, educational and research efforts on dogs in general and the English Springer Spaniel in particular. For more information about this worthy organization, go to <http://www.essfta.org/essfta/foundation.htm>.

Reading Resources

The New and Complete English Springer Spaniel by Julia Gasow and Edd K. Roggenkamp III. Includes both field and show sections.

The Culture Clash, by Jean Donaldson

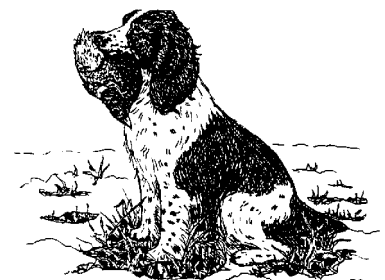
Terri Arnold's Dog Training Program, by Terri Arnold

How to Raise a Puppy You Can Live With, by Rutherford and Hayes

Agility Training: Fun Sport For All Dogs, by Jane Simmons-Moake

The Spaniel Manual can be obtained online at www.essfta.org/essfta/spanman1_toc.htm or by sending a \$2.00 check to the ESSFTA:

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Sketch by Karen Lee