

About the Bracco

Physical Characteristics



The Bracco Italiano is a very dignified dog. The breed is powerful and muscular, but not lumbering. His expression is intelligent and kind. He lives up to his noble Italian heritage in being very regal in both appearance and behavior. His head is more hound-like and less like that of a gundog. The occiput is pronounced. The nose should extend over the muzzle to form an angle. The neck is a strong cone shape. His ears are long - they should be able to touch the tip of the nose without being stretched. The breed has a smooth, flowing trot with plenty of reach and drive. The topline consists of two lines: the first from the withers to the 11th dorsal vertebra and the second is slightly arched to the rump. The tail is thick and tapering (but is normally docked 15-25cm). The feet are large and have dewclaws. Some dogs have double hind dewclaws. The coat is smooth and dense. The coat should be finer on the head and throat. They can be any of the following color/color combinations: white; orange and white; orange roan; chestnut and white; or chestnut roan. They are a large breed and weigh between 55-88 pounds.



Temperament

The Bracco is very much a people loving dog. They thrive on human companionship and have a need to be close to their people. The breed bonds closely with its family. The closer to his owner a Bracco is, the more content he is. It is affectionate and loyal. Bracchi love to play. They get along well with other dogs and pets. They are very willing to please. The Bracco is highly trainable, but can be stubborn. Harsh reprimands do not work with this breed, because they will ignore the command and nothing will be accomplished. The breed loves to hunt, and they excel at it. The Bracco knows when it has a job to do and takes it seriously. They are an active breed and need sufficient exercise to keep them happy. As puppies they may chew, but are not neurotic as some other high energy breeds are prone to be. Unlike other gundog breeds there is not a difference between show/pet lines and hunting lines.

Maintenance



Photo courtesy of Bravo Kennels

The Bracco Italiano requires daily exercise. If not given enough exertion they can become overly rambunctious and possibly destructive. A long walk or jog is a good way to exercise a Bracco. They make good jogging companions. Another way is to allow them to run free in a large, safely enclosed area. They love to swim, and it is good exercise for them. A young Bracco (or young dog of any large breed) should not be exercised by a bicycle, or any other method that would overly stress their growing bones. If they do not have access to a place to run on their own, 2 hours of exercise daily is probably best. A well exercised Bracco is a tractable, calm companion that sleeps well at night and is healthy.

The breed requires no difficult maintenance to keep its coat at its best. A hound glove is essential for the grooming of a Bracco. A boar's hair brush can also come in handy (this type of brush brings the oils to the top of the coat, making it shiny). A few minutes of brushing each week should keep the coat in good condition. Show dogs may need to be brushed more often, especially right before a show. The tips of the ears tend to get dirty, since they are long enough to get in the dog's water when he drinks. Scrubbing the ends with a wet rag usually does the trick, but sometimes a mild soap is needed to dissolve the dirt. Being a breed with large lips they are prone to drool a lot.



Photo courtesy of Bravo Kennels

Bracchi eat a lot. They are large dogs that require a lot of food. They have high metabolisms and burn up food quickly- especially if they exercise a lot. A high calorie diet is probably your best choice to keep weight on your Bracco. Of course, be careful that the dog does not become overweight. Ask your breeder for suggestions on a good brand of food. Dry dog food (especially for a dog that eats this much) is probably the best. Make sure that the food is nutritionally balanced. It would be best to talk to your vet or breeder before adding any supplements that might upset the balance. The Bracco's coat is a good way to judge if the food is working for your dog. A Bracco with a good diet should have a healthy looking, shiny coat that is slightly oily to the touch. A dull coat may indicate poor diet.

If fed dry dog food, a Bracco's teeth should not become too dirty. Brushing them is a good option, for the dog's health as well as appearance. You can purchase a finger brush and flavored dog toothpaste if it becomes an issue. Most dogs chew enough on their own to keep their teeth clean. It is best to get your dog used to having their teeth cleaned from a young age, even if you do not plan on cleaning them often. Dirty teeth can become a health issue and should be handled appropriately.