

THE SCHIPPERKE

Pronounced - 'Skip-er-key'
Information Sheet

The ideal Companion.

The Schipperke is an ideal house dog. As a whole, the breed is clean in habit, small enough to live in the small quarters of an apartment flat, economical to maintain, and very healthy.

Because as incurable busybodies, Schipperkes find many distractions within the house, they need very little exercise outside to keep in good physical condition and good health. It must be kept in mind, though, that the Schipperke must maintain an active way of life, whether in a city apartment or a country estate. Nothing delights Schipperkes more than to be with their owners for everything; be it a long rambling hike in the country, a leisurely walk along the city street, or even an idle day spent reading quietly.

Children and Schipperkes are natural companions. Though gentle with youngsters and babies in the family, this little dog becomes an unswerving protector at the approach of any perceived danger.

The common belief is that the Schipperke is yappy and inclined to snap without foundation. There may be some individuals with such faults, but it is not characteristic of the breed as a whole. Excessive barking for no reason comes generally from poor early training. It is necessary to train any dog to be a good citizen, regardless of the breed

The Origin.

The Schipperke is known to have dated back to 1690 where shoemakers in Belgium held a competition at the 'Grand Place' in Brussels. Each Schipperke wore a specially designed collar so that it didn't damage the coat.

During the early development of the Schipperke, it is known by two names, which left some controversy to the breed's true origin.

1. The name, Schipperke, was introduced by boat captains, which derived from the Flemish word 'Schip' meaning Boat and therefore Schipperke translated means 'Little Boat Man' It is believed that the tails were docked as to not upset the goods on the barges.

2. The Schipperke was found in homes of Business men, and it is believed that the name derived from the corruption of the word 'Scheper' meaning 'Little Shepherd'

It is also believed that the Schipperke descends directly from the fifth member of the Belgian Shepherd Dog, now extinct, the 'Leuvenaar'. This dog was frequently seen in the region of Louvain accompanying wagoners and messengers.

It is also believed that the Schipperke may have been crossed with the Pomeranian at some time, giving the breed its Spitz like characteristics.

What does the Schipperke look like.

The distinguishing features of the Schipperke are a distinctive silhouette with a distinct ruff and culottes. In appearance, the Schipperke is thickset and cobby - a small black dog possessing plenty of coat, an outstanding ruff and culottes, a 'foxy' head with an expressive face, and the complete lack of a tail. The front portion of the dog appears slightly heavier in bone than the rear, but the overall structure is relatively fine.

The Schipperke in Great Britain can also be found in a Gold or Cream colour, however the standard does allow for other solid colours. the docking of tails is also optional on the Schipperke, and if left on, it is preferred to resemble that of a 'Spitz tail' curling over the back.

Characteristics.

The Schipperke has been described as large dogs in small bodies. They have the instincts of a guard dog - protective, devoted, and courageous. They can be impish, active and a bit of a devil. At the time the breed was developed, dogs had to be useful to justify their existence. Just as a sheepdog is the guardian of herds and farm property, the Schipperke is the guardian of the household. In common with all guarding breeds, Schipperkes possess an inordinate sense of responsibility towards the home and everything in it and have a loyalty for the ones to whom they are devoted. The Schipperke is a curious breed - a trait which creates the perfect watchdog. Nothing in the home escapes close inspection. Although the Schipperke is a small dog, and would not inflict much bodily harm, a piecing bark will make enough noise to scare away any burglars and unwelcome strangers.

In 1882, a Belgian writer described the schipperke temperament as thus: 'A little, all black devil, but minus the cloven hoof and the tail, such is the Boatman's dog. A very demon for rats, mice, moles and anything that moves. An indefatigable watchdog, he rests neither day nor night, always on foot, weary of inspecting the house from cellar to garret and as soon as he observes anything amiss he warns his master by his piercing barks. He knows the ways of the family, mixes himself into everything and ends by thinking that he is the one who directs the household. His fidelity to his master is unalterable; his gentleness with children is equal to any test, but let a stranger beware if he lays a hand on any object or person; the Schipperke has teeth and can use them. A good stable dog, he is a great friend with horses and an excellent horseman'.

We hope that this gives you a basic insight into the Schipperke, and should you require any further information, please contact anyone on the Club's list of approved breeders, who will be pleased to provide any additional information or advice.

Or alternatively contact:

Melanie Reed-Peck
Byquy
27 Stow Rd
Stow-cum-Quy
Cambridge CB25 9AD