

# Congratulations on Your New Havanese Puppy

The Havanese Club of America (HCA) is the American Kennel Club (AKC) Parent Club of the Havanese breed. This introductory information is provided to help you and your new companion get off to a great start.

## Origin and Name

Havanese are recognized as the National Dog of Cuba. Although the Havanese breed is relatively new to the AKC, the Havanese breed origins can be traced back to the Bichon-type dogs brought to Cuba in the early 16th century.

Havanese have been known throughout history by a variety of names including the Bichon Havanese, the Blanquito Cubano, and the Bichon Habanero.



Cuban CH “Puppy” (1988-2002) the first Bichon Havanese Champion of Cuba. Puppy was born of a litter of six in 1988, and featured here on a 1992 Cuban postage stamp celebrating the nation’s only native purebred dog; the Havanese.

## General Disposition

Havanese are beloved as a friendly, playful, alert and intelligent Toy breed with a mischievous expression. They are loyal and loving family companions.

## General Appearance

Havanese are small sturdy dogs of many colors and marking patterns. They are a moderately boned (not fragile) Toy dog. The acceptable size in the standard is 8-1/2 to 11-1/2 inches at the shoulders, as defined in the breed standard for conformation. The untrimmed long, soft, wavy coat may be brushed or corded. High head carriage, topline rising slightly from withers to rump, body slightly longer than tall, and plumed tail carried over the back makes the Havanese



outline unmistakable. The unique springy gait sets Havanese apart from all other breeds.

## A Good Start in Life

To get your puppy off to a good start, we recommend classes for obedience and socialization. The time you spend in training, especially during the first year of your pet’s life, will be repaid by giving you a well-behaved companion that is bonded to you and your family for the rest of his life.



Crate training makes for a happy home environment. Crates provide a safe haven for the puppy, especially when you are not able to supervise him. Crates are also instrumental in potty training.

Havanese are happy little athletes and great family companions. They excel in all levels of competition in Obedience, Rally, Agility, Tracking, Dancing, FastCAT, Lure Coursing, Trick Dog, as well as Conformation. These and many more activities are available through your local Obedience or All Breed Club for both practice and competition.

Havanese also bring smiles to faces in hospitals, nursing homes, schools and libraries around the country as Therapy Dogs.

Both the AKC and the HCA websites have information about dog activities, training and recommendations for how to get started.

*For complete information on the Havanese breed, visit the Havanese Club of America at [havaneseclubofamerica.org](http://havaneseclubofamerica.org) or scan the QR code to take you directly to the HCA website.*



## Feeding and Care

Regular veterinary care, vaccinations and proper feeding are vital to your dog's good health. Today, proper nutrition can easily be obtained from on-line vendors or at pet specialty stores by purchasing a quality dog food. When feeding a high-quality dog food, extra supplements should not be necessary. Puppies require a high-quality puppy food and lots of love. With proper nutrition, routine veterinary care, regular exercise and grooming, your Havanese should live a long life. Keeping your dog at an optimum weight will contribute to a long healthy life.

## Grooming

Weekly grooming will generally keep your Havanese from matting, although you may find that your puppy will need daily brushing as he goes through the change from puppy to adult coat. To make your grooming session a pleasant experience use a good pin brush and take your time. Handling the puppy's feet and ears will make it easier for you and the puppy for home grooming as he becomes an adult dog.

The breeder of your puppy should be a resource for grooming or other issues that arise as your puppy grows. Grooming information is also available on the Havanese website.

## Health Comes First

Havanese are generally healthy, long-lived dogs. Many Havanese reach the age of 14-16 years. To make sure that your puppy is healthy, schedule a veterinary exam as soon as you get him home. The vet will conduct a physical exam and will review the vaccination and health information provided by your breeder. Your breeder should provide you with information regarding the health status of your puppy's parents.

Each breed has different health concerns, so the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) and the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) have teamed up to sponsor a database called the Canine Health Information Center (CHIC). If



your puppy's sire and dam have had the health testing required by the Havanese Club of America they will be issued a CHIC number.

The CHIC program provides accurate information about the results of a breeder's health testing. It is easy to check. Just go the OFA website at [www.ofa.org](http://www.ofa.org) and you can search the records by entering the dog's name or registration number.

Visit the Havanese Health section of [havaneseclubofamerica.org](http://havaneseclubofamerica.org) to learn more about common Havanese health issues.

## Responsible Pet Ownership

### *Spay/Neuter*

Breeding dogs is a huge responsibility that requires time, energy and money. Responsible breeders seek to improve their breed with every litter and they have the responsibility of maintaining healthy breeding stock free from hereditary defects. If you are truly interested in breeding your Havanese, consult your puppy's breeder and other Havanese breeders before undertaking this serious endeavor. Many pet Havanese are sold with a spay/neuter contract. Spay/neuter does not preclude being able to participate in companion events with your dog such as Obedience, Agility and Rally.

### *Placement*

If the day should come when you can no longer keep your Havanese for any reason, what should you do? The HCA urges you to never take your Havanese to an animal shelter. You should contact the breeder of your Havanese for assistance and refer to the contract that should have come with your puppy. Havanese Club of America members have signed a Code of Ethics stipulating that breeders are obligated to take back or help re-home any dog they sell, regardless of the circumstances necessitating return. For more information regarding placement and rescue services, please visit [havaneseclubofamerica.org](http://havaneseclubofamerica.org)

### *Learning More*

Browse the HCA website and you will find answers to many of your questions about training, health and history of our delightful breed. Looking to meet and socialize with other owners? Check out and possibly join a local club near you. [havaneseclubofamerica.org/local-clubs/](http://havaneseclubofamerica.org/local-clubs/)

Take a look at the American Kennel Club website at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org). It includes information for new dog owners as well as details about a variety of dog events.