

The Little-Known Terrier That Adores Children and the Elderly

Looking for a family-friendly dog? Look no further than this adorable, long-living pup that even looks a bit like a scruffy old man. Intelligent and eager to please, this breed will warm your heart and home.

Reviewed by Dr. Becker

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- The Border Terrier isn't as well-known as some of the other terrier breeds, but his adorable scruffy appearance and lively, affectionate personality is increasing his popularity as a family pet
- Border Terriers are full of energy and have a special affinity for children
- This breed is generally healthy, with an average lifespan of 12 to 15 years
- If you're thinking of adding a Border Terrier to your family, be sure to check your local shelters and rescue organizations for adoptable dogs
- Borders are generally healthy, though like all purebreds, they are predisposed to certain genetic health conditions

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8 Fun Facts About Border Terriers

- **The Border Terrier is among the oldest of Britain's Terriers**



The Border Terrier originated in the border country between Scotland and England, and was bred to chase fox. No one is sure which breeds are ancestors of the Border Terrier, but he's probably a relative of the Dandie Dinmont Terrier.

These dogs were named for the Border Hunt in 1870, and ran alongside foxhounds during fox hunts.

The Border Terrier breed was recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC) in 1930, but it has only been in recent years that these dogs have gained popularity as pets and show dogs.

- **The Border Terrier looks a bit like a scruffy old man**



These appealing little dogs have broad skulls, and most have short muzzles with a scissors bite, and V-shaped ears. The tail is naturally short.

Border Terriers have narrow bodies and are well-proportioned, with longer legs than other small terriers. Adult males are usually 13 to 16 inches at the shoulder and weigh 13 to 16 pounds. Females are slightly smaller at 11 to 14 inches tall and 11 to 14 pounds.

The Border Terrier has a double coat with a short, thick, and soft undercoat and a wiry, straight outer coat. Common coat colors are grizzle-and-tan, blue-and-tan, red, and wheaten.

- **Border Terriers are playful and bold**



The Border Terrier is every bit as lively and alert as she looks, while also managing to be affectionate and mild-mannered. She's a versatile family pet who enjoys playing with children and is also a good watchdog.

Puppies and young Borders are extremely active, but tend to mellow when they reach adulthood as long as they get adequate daily exercise. This breed does tend to dig, so it's important to make sure your Border can't tunnel her way out of your backyard or other enclosure.

- **Border Terriers have a strong hunting instinct**



Border Terriers are natural hunters and remarkably fast and agile. When socialized with cats, they typically don't view them as prey, but it's not wise to trust your Border around other small animals like birds, rabbits, hamsters, or guinea pigs.

- **Border Terriers can be stubborn and strong-willed**



To insure your Border Terrier grows into a confident, balanced dog, he needs firm, consistent guidance, and ongoing socialization and training. Borders can jump surprisingly high and run fast, which makes them excellent agility competitors. They are highly trainable and can quickly learn new tasks and tricks.

This dog is intelligent and eager to please, but he also has an independent streak. Borders can be trained to be therapy dogs and are especially good with kids and the elderly.

- **The Border Terrier coat is low-maintenance**



Your Border Terrier's wiry coat needs only weekly brushing and hand-stripping twice a year to remove dead hair. Most Border guardians prefer a completely natural look.

The Border coat sheds very little and is considered a good choice for allergy sufferers.

- **Border Terriers are a hardy breed**



Borders are generally healthy, though like all purebreds, they are predisposed to certain genetic health conditions, including hip dysplasia, Legg-Calvé-Perthes disease, heart defects, and Canine Epileptoid Cramping Syndrome (CECS). The average lifespan of the breed is 12 to 15 years.

- **Border Terriers excel at AKC Earthdog events**



Border Terriers have earned more AKC **Earthdog** titles than any other terrier. The Earthdog event is a non-competitive exercise in which terriers enter small underground wooden tunnels with twists and turns in pursuit of rats. (The rats are kept safe from the dogs.)

The Earthdog event is popular in the US and some European countries because the underground tunnels are easy for even larger dogs to navigate, the exercise is safe for the dogs, and no digging is involved.

Sources and References

[Dog Breed Info Center](#)

[Animal Planet \(Archived\)](#)

[Wikipedia](#)
