

# Dachs-Life 2012

## *Report on the Dachshund Breed Council's Health Survey*

*Dachshund Breed Council*



### **Report 2: Behaviour and Temperament**

## Introduction:

Dachs-Life 2012 was a survey of UK Dachshunds that was conducted between January 1st 2012 and March 31st 2012. The survey was widely advertised among the Breed Club community and also to many owners of pet Dachshunds, via online discussion groups and Facebook.

The Breed Council's Health and Welfare Sub-committee would like to express its thanks to everyone who helped promote the survey and to those Breed Clubs that kindly printed paper copies and distributed them to their members. The response to this survey has been truly remarkable. A total of 1501 surveys were captured online; some of these were entered from paper copies of the Survey Forms, but the majority were entered online by individual dog owners.

After removing duplicate entries and other data clean-up, there were 1464 reports which were used for analysis. By way of comparison, the Kennel Club's 2004 Health Survey received reports for 509 live Dachshunds and the largest breed response in 2004 was from Golden Retrievers with 1717 reports.

Report 1 summarised the analysis of Dachshund Health. This report presents the results and analysis of the questions on behaviour and temperaments where we asked owners to report whether their Dachshund was "Always", "Often", "Sometimes", or "Never" for the following questions:

- Outgoing/Friendly
- Excitable/Active
- Excessive/Persistent Barking
- House-training problems
- Submissive Urination (piddling)
- Separation Anxiety
- Noise/Thunderstorm Fear
- Aggressive with people
- Aggressive with other dogs
- Nervous/Fearful of people
- Destructive

## All Dachshunds:

	Outgoing/ Friendly:	Excitable / Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House- training Problems :	Submissive Urination (piddling):	Separ- ation Anxiety :	Noise/ Thunder- storm Fear:	Aggress- ive with people:	Aggress- ive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destr- uctive:
Always (%)	64%	36%	3%	1%	1%	3%	3%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Often (%)	21%	33%	12%	5%	2%	5%	4%	1%	4%	4%	2%
Some- times (%)	14%	25%	41%	25%	15%	22%	19%	9%	27%	24%	22%
Never (%)	2%	5%	43%	69%	82%	71%	74%	90%	68%	70%	75%

The majority (85%) of Dachshunds were described by their owners as Always or Often Outgoing and Friendly, but 1 in 50 was described as Never behaving in this way. Just over two-thirds of dogs were described as Always or Often Excitable and Active. We tend to describe Dachshunds as being a noisy breed, after all they were originally developed to have a loud bark. 15% of owners said their Always or Often barks excessively or persistently. What we don't know is how much physical or mental stimulation any of these dogs get with daily exercise and it would be interesting to know the extent to which more exercise would make a difference.

Anecdotally, the Miniature Dachshunds are often described as being more difficult to house-train than the Standards. Overall, nearly one third of owners said their Dachshund had house-training issues to some degree. Data later in this report will show the differences between each of the six varieties, which does support the anecdotal views. Four out of five owners said their Dachshund is not a submissive piddler.

Just under a third of owners said their Dachshund suffered from Separation Anxiety to some extent and a quarter suffer from noise or thunderstorm fear. Around a quarter were also reported as being destructive. As stated above, we don't know how much exercise these particular dogs get, so cannot deduce whether or not a lack of exercise is a causal factor in these behaviours.

1 in 10 is, to some extent, aggressive with people and nearly 1 in 3 is aggressive with other dogs, to some extent. 7 out of 10 were described as Never being nervous or fearful of people.

The following two Tables show the analysis for Males and Females. In general, although there appears to be little difference between the male and female results there are some differences which are statistically significant:

- 73% Dogs that are Always/Sometimes Excitable/Active vs. 67% of Bitches
- 9% of Dogs that Always/Sometimes suffer from Separation Anxiety vs. 6% of Bitches
- 1% of Dogs that are Always/Sometimes aggressive with people vs. 0% of Bitches
- 6% of Dogs that are Always/Sometimes aggressive with other dogs vs. 4% of Bitches
- 7% of Dogs that are Always/Sometimes nervous/fearful of people vs. 5% of Bitches

In other words, male Dachshunds are more likely to be excitable, aggressive with people and other dogs, nervous of people and suffer from Separation Anxiety, when compared with bitches.

**Males:**

	Outgoing/ Friendly:	Excitable/ Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House- training Problems:	Submiss- ive Urination (piddling):	Separat- ion Anxiety:	Noise/ Thunder- storm Fear:	Aggressive with people:	Aggres- sive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destru- ctive:
Always (%)	62%	37%	4%	2%	1%	4%	3%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Often (%)	21%	36%	13%	5%	3%	5%	4%	1%	5%	6%	3%
Sometim- es (%)	15%	23%	43%	28%	13%	25%	19%	12%	27%	24%	21%
Never (%)	2%	4%	40%	66%	83%	66%	74%	87%	67%	69%	77%

**Females:**

	Outgoing/ Friendly:	Excitable/ Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House - trainin g Proble ms:	Submis sive Urinati on (piddlin g):	Separa tion Anxiety :	Noise/ Thunder- storm Fear:	Aggres sive with people:	Aggres sive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destru- ctive:
Always (%)	65%	35%	3%	1%	1%	2%	3%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Often (%)	20%	32%	12%	4%	2%	4%	4%	0%	3%	4%	2%
Sometim es (%)	14%	27%	40%	23%	16%	20%	19%	8%	27%	24%	23%
Never (%)	1%	6%	45%	71%	82%	74%	74%	92%	69%	71%	74%

## Smooth-haired Dachshunds:

	Outgoing / Friendly:	Excitable / Active:	Excessive / Persistent Barking:	House-training Problems:	Submissive Urination (piddling):	Separation Anxiety :	Noise/ Thunderstorm Fear:	Aggressive with people:	Aggressive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destructive:
Always (%)	48%	44%	4%	2%	0%	5%	6%	1%	2%	7%	0%
Often (%)	27%	31%	13%	4%	2%	11%	4%	2%	6%	7%	7%
Sometimes (%)	22%	21%	43%	24%	14%	27%	26%	16%	37%	25%	25%
Never (%)	4%	4%	40%	70%	84%	58%	64%	81%	56%	61%	69%

The statistically significant differences between Smooths and the overall population in the survey are as follows:

- They are less outgoing/friendly (and just under half are aggressive with other dogs, at least sometimes)
- They suffer more from Separation Anxiety
- They are more nervous and fearful of people (and 1 in 4 are aggressive with people, at least sometimes)
- They are more destructive

## Long-haired Dachshunds:

	Outgoing / Friendly:	Excitable / Active:	Excessive / Persistent Barking:	House-training Problems:	Submissive Urination (piddling):	Separation Anxiety:	Noise/ Thunder-storm Fear:	Aggressive with people:	Aggressive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destructive:
Always (%)	73%	41%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Often (%)	15%	24%	13%	0%	0%	4%	4%	0%	1%	3%	2%
Sometimes (%)	10%	27%	47%	10%	5%	13%	15%	4%	19%	20%	29%
Never (%)	1%	8%	39%	90%	95%	82%	80%	96%	79%	76%	66%

The statistically significant differences between Longs and the overall population in the survey are as follows:

- They are easier to house-train
- They are less likely to be submissive piddlers
- They are less likely to be aggressive with people (only 4% are sometimes aggressive and 1 in 4 are nervous/fearful at least sometimes)
- They are less likely to be aggressive with other dogs (although 1 in 5 is at least sometimes aggressive)



## Wire-haired Dachshunds:

	Outgoing/ Friendly:	Excitable / Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House- training Problems :	Submiss- ive Urination (piddling):	Separ- ation Anxiety :	Noise/ Thunder- storm Fear:	Aggres- sive with people:	Aggres- sive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destruc- tive:
Always (%)	80%	35%	2%	1%	1%	0%	6%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Often (%)	15%	35%	12%	1%	1%	1%	5%	0%	4%	1%	1%
Sometim- es (%)	4%	27%	38%	20%	23%	19%	16%	7%	31%	17%	27%
Never (%)	1%	4%	47%	78%	75%	79%	73%	93%	65%	81%	71%

The statistically significant differences between Wires and the overall population in the survey are as follows:

- They are more outgoing and friendly (but 1 in 3 is aggressive with other dogs, at least sometimes)
- They are easier to house-train
- They are less likely to suffer from Separation Anxiety
- They are more likely to suffer from Noise/Thunderstorm Fear
- They are less likely to be nervous/fearful of people (but 7% are aggressive with people, at least sometimes)

## Miniature Smooth-haired Dachshunds:

	Outgoing / Friendly:	Excitable/ Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House-training Problems :	Submissive Urination (piddling):	Separation Anxiety :	Noise/ Thunderstorm Fear:	Aggressive with people:	Aggressive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destructive:
Always (%)	64%	43%	5%	5%	2%	5%	3%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Often (%)	21%	34%	15%	8%	5%	6%	6%	1%	3%	6%	3%
Sometimes (%)	15%	19%	42%	30%	17%	27%	20%	11%	27%	24%	26%
Never (%)	1%	4%	37%	58%	76%	62%	71%	88%	69%	68%	71%

The statistically significant differences between Mini-Smooths and the overall population in the survey are as follows:

- They are more excitable and active
- They are less likely to bark excessively/persistently
- They are more difficult to house-train
- They are more likely to be submissive piddlers
- They are more likely to suffer from Separation Anxiety

## Miniature Long-haired Dachshunds:

	Outgoing/ Friendly:	Excitable/ Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House- training Problems:	Submiss- ive Urination (piddling):	Separa- tion Anxiety :	Noise/ Thunder- storm Fear:	Aggressive with people:	Aggres- sive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destruc- tive:
Always (%)	53%	27%	5%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Often (%)	26%	32%	12%	6%	0%	4%	2%	0%	4%	4%	1%
Sometim- es (%)	18%	31%	38%	32%	10%	26%	17%	9%	26%	33%	13%
Never (%)	3%	9%	45%	62%	90%	68%	80%	90%	70%	62%	86%

The statistically significant differences between Mini-Longs and the overall population in the survey are as follows:

- They are less outgoing and friendly
- They are less excitable and active
- They are more likely to be submissive piddlers
- They are more likely to suffer from Noise/Thunderstorm Fear
- They are more likely to be nervous and fearful of people (but only 1 in 10 is aggressive with people, at least sometimes)
- They are less likely to be destructive

## Miniature Wire-haired Dachshunds:

	Outgoing / Friendly:	Excitable / Active:	Excessive/ Persistent Barking:	House-training Problems:	Submissive Urination (piddling):	Separation Anxiety:	Noise/ Thunderstorm Fear:	Aggressive with people:	Aggressive with other dogs:	Nervous/ Fearful of people:	Destructive:
Always (%)	65%	33%	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Often (%)	19%	38%	9%	4%	3%	4%	3%	0%	5%	5%	2%
Sometimes (%)	15%	26%	41%	23%	14%	16%	21%	8%	25%	21%	18%
Never (%)	0%	4%	48%	73%	82%	77%	74%	91%	68%	73%	79%

The statistically significant differences between Mini-Wires and the overall population in the survey are as follows:

- They are less likely to bark excessively/persistently
- They are less likely to suffer from Separation Anxiety

## Summary and Conclusions:

The vast majority of Dachshunds live their lives as family pets in a home environment and are neither “working” dogs, nor kenneled. Their temperaments therefore need to reflect that lifestyle and the expectations of their owners that they will be able to live long, happy lives as pets. We do have to recognise their working origins and the fact that their temperaments were originally suited to their work.

The UK Breed Standard describes the Dachshund as “**Faithful, versatile and good tempered**”. They are also described as: “**Intelligent, lively, courageous to the point of rashness, obedient**”. It is therefore disappointing to see that 1 in 10 is, to some extent, aggressive with people and nearly 1 in 3 is aggressive with other dogs, to some extent. There are some differences in aggressiveness tendencies between the varieties, with the Longs being least aggressive (with people and dogs) and the Smooths being most aggressive. The rank order of aggressiveness is as follows:

<b>Least Aggressive</b>					<b>Most Aggressive</b>
Long	Mini Long	Mini Wire	Wire	Mini Smooth	Smooth

The rank order for being outgoing/friendly and not nervous/fearful of people is as follows:

<b>Most outgoing/ Least nervous</b>					<b>Least outgoing/ Most nervous</b>
Wire	Long	Mini Wire	Mini Smooth	Mini Long	Smooth

The survey has confirmed what we all know: Dachshunds can be noisy! The rank order for excessive and persistent barking is as follows:

<b>Least excessive barking</b>					<b>Most excessive barking</b>
Mini Wires	Wires	Mini Longs	Smooth	Long	Mini Smooth

Miniature Dachshunds have also been confirmed to be more difficult to house-train than the Standard varieties. The rank order for ease of house-training is as follows:

<b>Easiest to house-train</b>					<b>Most difficult to house-train</b>
Long	Wire	Mini Wire	Smooth	Mini Long	Mini Smooth

Taking the “Always” and “Never” scores for the positive traits and negative traits, it is possible to calculate an overall ranking for temperament and behaviour:

<b>Most positive traits overall</b>					<b>Least positive traits overall</b>
Long	Wire	Mini Wire	Mini Long	Mini Smooth	Smooth

**We all know, however, that our Dachshund is the best!**

Thanks, once again, to everyone who contributed to Dachs-Life 2012.