

Sandicam English Springer Spaniels

Caring for your English Springer Spaniel

Breed History and Characteristics:

The English Springer Spaniel has a history that stretches back to the Middle Ages, when Springers were used to find and “spring” game for hunters using falcons, greyhounds or nets. Early spaniels are thought to have originated in Spain, but many varieties of sporting spaniels were largely developed in the British Isles. The English Springer is the largest in build of these breeds, which include the Cocker, the Field, the Sussex, the Clumber and the Welsh Springer Spaniel.

The Springer is friendly, eager to please, quick to learn, and willing to obey. He enjoys being part of family activities. He is an affectionate, loyal and sometimes an exuberant companion.

Size: approximately 20” at the shoulder

Colour: Liver & White; Black & White; Liver, White & Tan or Black, White & Tan.

Feeding:

Sandicam puppies have been reared on the premium food, “Advance Puppy Growth” and we suggest you continue with this food to avoid any tummy upset. Should you change the food at any time in the future, please give half and half for a few days before changing over completely. If you feed a premium food, there is no need to give any additives. Advance is available from Pet Shops or Vets. Feed according to instructions on the packet. If the puppy goes off his food, which can happen from time to time, you can pour a small amount of chicken or beef stock over it for flavour or add some Pedigree Puppy tin food to the dry food.

A mix of some chicken or beef mince, along with some pasta or veggies may also be mixed for a little variety.

Food should be given three to four times a day, depending on your circumstances. If you go out to work each day, give the morning feed, then two in the evening, with the last feed quite late at night. Leave some dry food or some puppy biscuits for it to chew while you are away. If you give four feeds, then they will be smaller in size.

Raw bones are also excellent for puppies to chew on. NEVER give any dog a cooked bone as these can splinter and cause serious problems.

Ensure your puppy has plenty of fresh water available at all times.

It is important to adhere to the instructions on the food packet and change diet according to the growth of the puppy. Never over feed the pup, as this is detrimental to skeletal development and, whilst the body should be well covered, it should NOT be fat.

As the puppy grows you will gradually need to reduce the number of feeds per day until it is twelve months old, after which it will only require one feed per day. We like to feed our dogs in the morning as, when we are out during the day, they sleep and are ready for play when we return home. Using this routine lessens the possibility of dogs barking each night when they expect to be fed and if you are late home, a barking dog can disturb neighbours.

Grooming:

The English Springer Spaniel's topcoat is naturally silky with a dense undercoat to resist all weather. The Springer does not require a lot of grooming, however, it is important to brush and comb it regularly, especially the ears.

Brushing not only enhances the look of the coat but also stimulates the skin and encourages new hair growth. A good stiff bristle brush is required and a medium tooth comb. If you have any problems, just let me know. A dog being shown requires a more detailed grooming regime.

To prevent food from getting into ear feathering and causing it to knot up, place a "snood", a piece of tubed fabric with elastic at either end, (a pantyhose leg, cut off at each end will suffice) over the puppy's head whilst it is eating. The snood should be removed at the conclusion of the meal.

It is also important to keep feet neatly trimmed of long hair. Carefully cut out the hair around each pad and underneath, in between the pads, with sharp scissors. A trimmed foot makes it easier to check for grass seeds and prevents mud from sticking to the hair between the toes, which, if left unattended, can be quite painful for the dog and may cause infection. It is also wise to check the dog all over, especially the ears and feet, for grass seeds after exercising in grassy areas. This is mandatory when grass is seeding. If a seed lodges itself in any part of the body it can travel quite a distance very quickly causing some harm. Its removal usually requires veterinary attention.

The ears on the Springer require attention and, apart for keeping the hair free from knots, it is important to ensure that the ear canal remains dry as this will assist in preventing infection.

When bathing your Springer, place a cotton wool ball in each ear to prevent water from entering. Remember to remove the cotton wool once the bath is over. It is also advisable to cut the coat around the ear orifice so that air can more easily enter the canal. Each time you brush your Springer, check the ears and if there is a foul smelling emitting, this usually suggests a problem, such as ear canker and veterinary advice should be sought.

Bathing:

Bath your Springer when, and if, the need arises. Most of the time, any dirt or mud will brush out when the coat is dry. You may use any shampoo or conditioner as long as you rinse the coat completely, however you can purchase excellent products from any reputable Pet Shop.

Once the feathering has increased in length, it may be necessary to “blow-dry” the hair on the legs, body and ears. Ensure the puppy is completely dry before putting it to bed.

Ears:

(See above)

Make sure you do not poke anything into the ears as this may cause irritation and potential inflammation. If you have any problems with the ears smelling foul, please consult your vet.

Nails:

It is also wise to keep the nails short and you may need to invest in some toenail clippers if cutting them is required. Only clip the end or white part (sometimes it can be black!) of the nail taking care not to cut the ‘quick’ as this will be painful for the pup and the nail will bleed. If this occurs, you will need to put some Potash Permanganate or Condy’s Crystals on the end to stop the bleeding. If your puppy is constantly on concrete or regularly taken for walks on pavement, it may not require its nails to be clipped.

Make grooming sessions pleasant for you and the dog - start when quite young, as this will avoid tussles which may occur when the pup is older and is much more difficult to manage. Teach the puppy to lie on its side during these grooming sessions as this will enable you to easily trim the hair on the feet etc. I find they enjoy the brushing sessions and often go to sleep.

Health Care:

Whilst the Springer is a relatively healthy and hardy breed, there are some basic elements of health care that you need to consider:

Parasites:

Please worm your dog regularly, both for intestinal worms, and for heartworm. Heartworm can KILL.

There is no excuse for fleas – they are easily controlled with many products that are readily available on the market.

Ticks are a serious problem in many areas of Australia. Some areas have the Paralysis

Tick – which can kill your Springer. Products are available to control this problem – please consult your Veterinarian.

Vaccinations:

Please have your puppy's vaccination schedule completed, and thereafter get a yearly booster shot.

Yearly injections are now available for Heartworm. Ask your Vet.

There are changes occurring in the way vaccinations are being carried out and you might like to do some research on the net regarding this. Many vets now recommend vaccinations only every three years and some recommend the Titre test which measures the anti-bodies in the dog's body. However, if you leave your dog at a Boarding Kennel, they will require a current vaccination certificate.

De-sexing:

As we expect that you don't intend to breed from your Springer (hard work and high cost!), then having your dog de-sexed is a great way of reducing potential reproductive issues that can arise in an older Springer. Ask your Vet.

Micro Chipping:

A lost dog can be very stressful, both on the dog and the family. Ensure you transfer your dog's microchip number to your address.

Exercise:

The Springer does not need a lot of exercise as a pup, but as it gets older it is advisable to walk the dog daily or at least three times a week. This is not only good for the dog but also for you and will prevent the dog from becoming bored which may lead to destruction of things around the home.

Although the Springer will adapt to any environment from a farm to a suburban backyard, it loves to exercise. Teach your Springer to chase balls in the backyard, or play other games that will provide natural exercise. Springers also enjoy a variety of "doggie toys" to play with. Take care to remove anything from the toy that can be chewed off and swallowed.

In many areas, the local Council will have fully fenced off-leash areas. These are a GREAT idea. Enquire with your local council. There are also many obedience and agility clubs, fly ball clubs and even lure coursing clubs. Ask your local council office for details.

We hope you have many rewarding years with your "Sandicam" Springer and we look forward to sharing your experiences.