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| Sporting | Hound | Working | Terrier | Toy | Non-sporting | Herding | Miscellaneous |
| The [**sporting group**](http://www.dogguide.net/sporting.php) consists of pointers, retrievers, setters and spaniels. These dogs are normally very athletic, good runners, great swimmers (they love water!) and fantastic hunting companions. Because of their athletic nature, sporting dogs need a great deal of exercise to keep them both mentally and physically active. Sporting dogs are quite intelligent, in part because of the fact that they were bred to have the skills to track down animals in complex environments. | Almost all dogs in the [**hound group**](http://www.dogguide.net/hound.php) have a magnified sense in order to track animals in a hunt. Most hounds have an extremely strong sense of smell, but some hounds actually have enhanced sight and are referred to as sight hounds. Familiar hounds include the beagle, dachshund, the ultra-fast greyhound, and the blood hound. Less familiar breeds include the Scottish Deerhound and the Saluki. When it comes to groupings, the hound group tells you less about what to expect from your dog than most of the others. Some hounds need lots of exercise, while others don't need much at all. Some hounds are active, some are lazy. Some hounds love to sprint, others like to just trot along. | Breeds in the [**working group**](http://www.dogguide.net/working.php) were originally bred to perform labor intensive tasks to assist human beings in their daily lives. Working dogs tend to be bigger, stronger and more robust than other dogs. Common tasks have involved the guarding of property and goods, transportation across land, pulling items up inclines, the guarding of nobility and aristocracy, as well as tasks involving general protection, safety and rescue etc. Some popular guard dogs include the Boxer, the Great Dane, the Doberman Pinscher, and the Saint Bernard. Lesser known breeds in the working group include the Samoyed, Kuvasz, and Black Russian Terrier. Working dogs are normally considered to be the worst family dogs because of their large size and determination and the potential for injury that they present. | Breeds in the [**terrier group**](http://www.dogguide.net/terrier.php) have become more and more popular as time goes on. This has a lot to do with their distinctive looks (many terriers have unique facial structures and unique wired coats) and personality. Terriers also tend to be smaller than the average dog, which is appealing to people with families and smaller living quarters. They tend to retain their puppy-like cuteness deep into life. If you are interested in a terrier, make sure that you are aware of the fact that they do not get along well with other dogs, cats, ferrets or other pets. This has to do with the fact that terriers were bred to hunt small animals on farms and personal property (so definitely don't bring a terrier home to a ferret or rabit!). Terriers are also more difficult to train than the average dog, and aren't normally recommended for first-time dog owners. Well-known terriers include the Bull Terrier, Irish Terrier, Parson Russell Terrier and Norwich Terrier. Lesser known terriers include the Dandie Dinmont Terrier, Bedlington Terrier and Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier. | The [**toy group**](http://www.dogguide.net/toy.php) is characterized by dogs with small size but strong personalities. They are perfect indoor and apartment dogs, though many of them are pure bundles of energy. In fact, don't make any assumptions about their small size. Many toys serve perfectly well as watchdogs because of their barking tendencies. Some toy dogs are just smaller versions of larger dogs which belong to other groups. Toy poodles, Miniature Pinschers and Italian Greyhounds represent this type of toy. Other toys don't have any clear correlates in larger groups. The Chihuahua and Chinese Crested are two such breeds. | The [**Non-Sporting group**](http://www.dogguide.net/non-sporting.php) isn't as well defined as some of the others. Many of the dogs in this group have recognizable ancestors in the hound, terrier, sporting and even working groups. Dogs in this group tend to be medium-small and they include such well known breeds as the Bulldog, Poodle and Boston Terrier. | The [**herding group**](http://www.dogguide.net/herding.php) merely represents a sub-section of the working group: namely, those dogs that were bred and excelled at herding tasks (as opposed to other working tasks). Herding involves the skill of controlling, grouping and directing packs of other animals. Herding dogs are well known for nipping, a strategy that they used for herding larger animals. Because nipping is quite annoying, owners would be well served to actively train against nipping. Still, instinct often prevails, so don't be surprised if dogs in the herding group nip at your guests feet at dinner. Herding dogs also tend to have higher than average barking tendencies, as this was another herding tool. Nonetheless, proper training can help minimize this negative trait. Well known herding dogs include the German Shepherd and the world famous Collie. Other herding dogs include the Briard, the Puli and the four breeds of Belgian Sheepdog. | The [**miscellaneous group**](http://www.dogguide.net/miscellaneous.php) is really a stepping stone for a breed to get access to the AKC's seven other groups. You can think of it as a probationary group that the AKC uses to ensure that a breed is poised for long-term success before admitting it into one of the elite groups. |