

One of the Loudest Dogs You'll Ever Hear

Don't bring this dog home if you live in an apartment, or 'must have' quiet. They're loud and gregarious, friendly, and immensely popular. Their name comes from the Middle French word for 'wide throat.' One is even part of a famous cartoon strip with an active imagination.

Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Beagles are loving, gentle and friendly dogs with an independent streak and an intelligent nature
- Beagles are scenthounds and will follow a trail with unbroken determination (making a fenced yard or walks on a lease essential)
- Beagles are vocal dogs, known for baying loudly, and they also enjoy companionship from both humans and other dogs

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Beagles, the 5th most popular dog breed in America, are adored for their curious and friendly personalities, and their love of companionship and adventure. Beagles actually date back to the 1300s and were originally used for trailing rabbits in England.¹

As scenthounds, Beagles love to follow a trail. They've got about 220 million scent receptors in their noses, compared to about 5 million in humans,² so it's no wonder that they're even used by law enforcement for contraband detection.

Beagles have a small to medium build, but don't let their size fool you. These compact dogs are hardy and love to be active, although they have an independent (some might say stubborn) streak that requires a patient and persistent owner.

What else should you know about Beagles, especially if you're considering making one your new best friend? Paw Nation has summed up 10 cool facts about Beagles that virtually everyone (even non-Beagle owners!) will want to know ...³

10 Beagle Fun Facts

1. **They're thousands of years old** — Beagles are an old dog breed, so old that their exact origins are unknown. However, modern-day Beagles' ancestors lived in England around the Roman Empire era or before, and became popular with the rise of fox hunting in the area.
2. **The first beagles were miniature** — Early "Beagles" were only eight or nine inches high – small enough to carry in a pocket. Known as pocket Beagles or miniature Beagles, it wasn't until later that these tiny dogs were bred into the larger hunting hounds we know today.

3. **Beagles have white-tipped tails** — If a Beagle is purebred, it will have some white in its tail. It may only be a few hairs at the tip, or it may be mostly white, but a "Beagle" without any white in its tail is probably a mix.
4. **Beagle means "loudmouth" in French** — Beagles are known for being very vocal, with barking, baying and howling. According to Paw Nation:

"In fact, it is believed the name 'Beagle' comes the Middle French 'bee gueule,' literally 'wide throat,' but more poetically translated as 'loudmouth.'"

5. **They're very popular in the US** — Beagles are one of the most beloved dog breeds in America. As of 2014, they were the fifth most popular breed (down from fourth place in 2013).
6. **Snoopy is a beagle** — The "Peanuts" character Snoopy is arguably the most famous fictitious Beagle. Snoopy was silent for the first few years of the comic strip, but later was given an active imagination and inner monologue.
7. **Queen Elizabeth I loved beagles** — Queen Elizabeth II is known as a corgi fan, but the first Queen Elizabeth loved and owned pocket Beagles, which were small enough to fit in one hand.
8. **Beagles in the White House** — President Lyndon Johnson had two Beagles, named Him and Her, in the white house during his presidency. He was often photographed walking and playing with the dogs.
9. **Barry Manilow loves beagles** — Singer Barry Manilow adopted a Beagle in the '70s and named him Bagel. Bagel was featured on several album covers, including one featuring Manilow wearing a t-shirt that read "I Love Beagles."
10. **The US Department of Homeland Security has a beagle brigade** — The US government trains Beagles to sniff out luggage at airports, helping to find contraband agricultural products and prevent them from reaching American soil.

Are You Thinking of Adding a Beagle to Your Family?

Beagles are wonderful family dogs, but there are several factors to consider before bringing one home. For starters, Beagles are pack animals and do well with other dogs. They also appreciate human companionship and do not enjoy spending long hours alone. A Beagle left alone for too long may become destructive, especially if he hasn't gotten enough exercise.

Beagles are inquisitive and strong-minded. They will follow their noses, which means they'll run off if they catch a whiff of something interesting. If you're looking for a guard dog, a Beagle may not be the best choice, since they tend to be friendly, even to strangers.

Also, remember that Beagles are very vocal dogs. The most common reason they're turned over to shelters is because of excessive baying,⁴ so they may not make the best apartment dogs. If you want to hear a Beagle howling firsthand, check out the video below.

That being said, Beagles are loving, gentle and intelligent dogs that find a lasting place in many people's hearts. If you'd like to add a Beagle to your family, I recommend you check out one of the many Beagle rescue organizations in the US, which have dogs of all ages available across the country.

Sources and References

Paw Nation May 30, 2014

¹ Animal Planet, Beagles

^{2,4} Dogtime, Beagles

³ Paw Nation May 30, 2014
