

What exactly is a Jack Russell Terrier? • Why are Jack Russell Terriers such good hunters? • Why are Jack Russell Terriers so popular? • How long do Jack Russells live? • How active are Jack Russell Terriers? • What are 10 good reasons to want a Jack Russell Terrier? • Do Jack Russell Terriers make good apartment dogs? • What are 10 bad reasons to want a Jack Russell Terrier? • What are the top 10 reasons people give up their Jack Russell Terriers? • Do Jack Russell Terriers bark very much? • Are Jack Russells hard to house-train? • How big do Jack Russells get? • Do Jack Russells shed? • Are Jack Russells friendly with strangers?

2

What About Jack Russell Terriers?

What exactly is a Jack Russell Terrier?

He's a feisty, incredibly active little terrier who, despite weighing only from 8 to 15 pounds, thinks he is a large dog. Jack Russells vary in height, and can be anywhere from 10 inches at the top of the shoulder to 15 inches. They are usually white with black or tan markings, or a combination of both. They come in two different coat types: smooth or broken-haired.

What else are Jack Russell Terriers called?

The American Kennel Club uses the term Parson Russell Terriers, as they do in England. In this book, we will call them the name they have long been known by in this country, which is Jack Russell Terriers, or the shortened version, Jacks.

What are Jack Russell Terriers used for? Why?

Jack Russells are tough, outdoor dogs used for hunting small animals, for competitive canine sports and for companionship. They have a very powerful hunting instinct that has been bred into them for centuries, making them among the best hunting dogs around.

Jack Russell Terriers were originally bred to "go to ground"—that is, to follow prey underneath the ground. When a fox, rabbit or other rodent tries to escape by running into its underground burrow, the Jack follows the animal into the burrow. The Jack then catches the animal on the run or after it has been cornered, and kills the prey. The prey sometimes fights back, which means the Jack Russell has to be a brave, tough little dog to stand up to this defensive attack.

Today, people are able to use the Jack Russell's talents in a variety of ways. The dogs compete successfully in terrier hunting competitions (called earthdog trials), do well in sports that require running and jumping and are great for keeping farms and ranches free from rodents.

Why are Jack Russell Terriers such good hunters?

They are tenacious, fearless and relentless. Jack Russells have been known to follow prey for miles and miles without giving up. Once they catch their prey, they usually kill it. Their prey can include anything from a wild rabbit to the neighbor's cat.

In the 1800s and early 1900s, Jack Russells were used during foxhunts to pursue the fox once the animal had retreated into its burrow. While the foxhounds "gave voice"—that is, bayed loudly so the hunter would know where the fox had hidden, the Jack Russell went into the fox's burrow and sought to chase the fox out so the hunter could kill it. Since a fox is about the same size as a Jack Russell, it took a tough little terrier to tackle this job underground.

Jack Russells use almost all their senses when hunting. They listen to hear their prey and use their noses to follow its scent. They are quick to catch sight of an animal on the run with their good vision. They also use their intelligence to outsmart animals who are trying to escape by running through a series of underground burrows.

How did Jack Russells get this strong hunting instinct?

Farmers living in England have bred them for hundreds of years to be aggressive hunters. Animals such as rats, mice and gophers plagued farmers by eating their crops and making nests and burrows on their property. These farmers needed a dog who could work on its own to hunt down these rodents and kill them.

Jack Russells were also used by foxhunters to help in the hunt, and were bred in part for this use. Since the fox is an animal who fights back when cornered by a dog, foxhunters needed a dog with incredible spunk and courage for this kind of hunting.

4

What About Jack Russell Terriers?

What do Jack Russells do when they are hunting?

If their prey is above ground, they will chase their prey until they catch it, and will kill it if they can. They will run the prey down until the animal is too exhausted to run any further. Or they will corner the prey until they are able to grasp it in their jaws or underneath their paws. If the animal goes into an underground burrow, the Jack Russell will follow, racing through the animal's burrows until he corners the creature. If the burrow is too small for the Jack to fit, the dog will dig his way into the burrow until he unearths the prey.

Rodents hiding in haystacks, between walls or underneath woodpiles are not safe from this breed. Jack Russells will dig or chew their way through any kind of barrier to get access to their prey. In fact, one Jack in California tore a huge hole in his owner's living room wall because he heard a mouse squeaking inside.

Why are Jack Russell Terriers so popular?

Jack Russells have an endearing appearance. They have bright eyes, neat little ears and an inquisitive look. Many people have seen dogs like Eddie on the NBC sitcom *Frasier* and the dog who plays Wishbone on the PBS special of the same name, and think Jacks are cute and mellow like those TV dogs. What they don't realize is that the average Jack Russell is nothing like Eddie or Wishbone. Many Jack Russell Terriers end up abandoned by their owners because most people can't handle these complex dogs.

People who enjoy living with this breed appreciate their dog's difficult personality, and even boast about it. They think it's fun to have a busy, mischievous dog who always gets into trouble around every turn.

How are Jack Russells not like Eddie or Wishbone?

The Jack Russells you see on TV are acting in more ways than one. They are not just pretending to be Eddie or Wishbone, they are pretending to be nice, well-behaved dogs. You could even say they are acting like a breed other than a Jack Russell Terrier!

The Jacks who play Eddie and Wishbone have undergone thousands of hours of specialized training to get them to behave the way they do on TV, and put on a ruse of being mellow and easygoing. In real life, these same dogs are typical Jack Russell Terriers: they are extremely active and often get into trouble. In fact, trainers who work with movie animals look for dogs with a lot of energy and drive for this kind of work. That same energy and drive that makes them great movie dogs can make them terrible pets who will drive their owners nuts.

Page

9:32

01 540890 Ch01.qxd 10/22/03

The good behavior of Jack Russell Terrier actors is usually limited to the short periods of time they are required to be in front of the camera. In fact, before he was finally adopted by his current trainer, one of the Jack Russell Terriers who played Eddie on *Frasier* was abandoned twice by pet owners who couldn't deal with him.

How long do Jack Russells live?

Jack Russells often live to be 16 years old, and stay active right up until the end of their lives. One Jack Russell living in California is 17 years old, and her owners claim she has as much energy as she had when she was a puppy.

How long do Jack Russells stay puppies?

Some people say that Jack Russells never grow up! They remain active and full of energy long after they reach adulthood, which is two years of age. The primary difference between an adult Jack and a puppy of the breed is that adult Jack Russells have honed their hunting skills and have become more assertive and sometimes even more aggressive.

How active are Jack Russell Terriers?

They are extremely active, possibly more so than any other breed of dog. They never stop moving, are always looking for something to do, and are constantly on the hunt. In fact, Jack Russells are so active and aggressive about finding prey, they often drive their owners crazy and kill or injure other pets. Jacks who don't have an outlet for all their energy often become destructive and will dig up the yard, chew up furniture and bark incessantly.

Jack Russells are the canine equivalent of the Energizer Bunny. They keep going and going and going. A Jack Russell may eventually crash on

the couch at the end of the day, but that is only if he has spent that day hunting, running outdoors, chasing balls and generally moving nonstop almost the entire time.

The activity level of the average Jack Russell Terrier is about 10 times that of the average Labrador Retriever, for example. Labs like to run and have fun, but eventually they do sack out on the living room floor. A Jack Russell has to work long and hard before he will have the urge to lie down and sleep for an extended period of time.

Labs also like to take time out to smell the roses. They will kick back and sit at their owner's sides, watching a sunset or gazing at the birds flying overhead. Jack Russells, on the other hand, are hard pressed to sit still for very long. They aren't fans of watching sunsets, and would just as soon catch and eat the birds flying overhead instead of gazing at them.

What are 10 good reasons to want a Jack Russell Terrier?

- **1.** You live on a ranch or a farm and want a dog who will thrive in that kind of environment.
- You want a dog who will keep rodents, birds and other small animals off your property.
- 3. You want an intelligent, active dog to compete in dog activities.
- You want an energetic dog for companionship for outdoor activities.
- 5. You want an active, entertaining dog with a sense of humor.
- **6.** You have trained dogs in the past, and are looking for a much greater challenge.
- 7. You want an active dog who will be good around horses.
- **8.** You have a very active outdoor lifestyle and want a dog who can keep up with you.
- 9. You want an active dog with a cheerful demeanor.
- **10.** You want an affectionate, happy, active dog with plenty of energy and enthusiasm for life.

Why are Jack Russells best suited to life on a ranch or a farm?

There is always something to do on a ranch or farm and plenty of space to run. Jack Russells amuse themselves in such rural environments by hunting for rodents, catching flies, climbing on haystacks, following horses around, tormenting barn cats and stalking cowbirds. They also like to run after other dogs, chase anything that runs past, follow people around and attack moving farm equipment.

This is the kind of constant stimulation the Jack Russell needs to keep him from getting bored.

Why is wanting to get rid of rodents, birds and other small animals a good reason to have a Jack Russell?

Jack Russells live to hunt, and will work tirelessly to capture, kill or chase away any small creature that wanders onto your property. If their prey is underground, they will dig furiously until they unearth the hapless creature. If they can catch a bird, they will, by stalking it like a cat and then running and leaping into the air to catch it. Even when not successful at actually catching birds, Jack Russells do a great job of chasing birds away. Birds quickly learn that any farm or ranch harboring a Jack Russell is not a safe place to be. In fact, just about any animal quickly learns this. Mice and rats will still appear at facilities that have feed and grain stored in sheds and barns, but they will make themselves scarce if there is a Jack Russell Terrier on guard.

Why are Jack Russells good for competing in dog activities?

Speed sports like flyball and agility are perfect for Jack Russells because of the breed's limitless energy and profound drive to perform. Jacks have the nonstop energy and the urge to run and participate in activities that are needed for canine dog sports. It takes a high-energy dog to be successful at these kinds of sports, and Jack Russells are never short on energy or the desire to use it.

Why do Jack Russells make good companions for outdoor activities?

Jack Russells never get tired—*never*. You can hike all day with your Jack Russell and he'll still be up for a game of ball when you get home. You can go camping, and your Jack Russell will try to help you set up your tent. If you go jogging, your Jack will run alongside you tirelessly, and probably pressure you to go even faster. Boating on a lake is another activity enjoyed by Jack Russells, who have no qualms about leaping in to the water to retrieve a tennis ball. Jacks also make great biking companions, and can run alongside a bicycle for miles without getting tired.

Why are Jack Russells so entertaining?

They are natural clowns and are truly fun-loving dogs, up for any kind of activity. They also have funny quirks that can make you laugh. Some of the antics typical of Jack Russells are licking walls, sleeping with all four feet in the air, and tearing around the house, dashing up and over furniture like a maniac, for no apparent reason.

There is something comical about the Jack Russell personality that many people can appreciate. The dog who plays Eddie on *Frasier* is a good example of this. The human actors on the show often play straight man to Eddie's comic antics. One of the reasons Eddie is so funny is because he is a Jack Russell Terrier. His attitude and demeanor lend itself to uproarious laughter.

Why are Jack Russells good dogs for someone who has trained dogs in the past and is looking for a challenge?

Because Jack Russells are difficult to train. They are not like Golden Retrievers, Poodles or Collies, breeds who were bred to pay close attention to their handlers for direction in their work. Instead, Jacks have short attention spans and need a lot of motivation, like a special food or a favorite toy, to stay focused. Even then they can be hard to train because of their very independent nature. They have their own ideas about how things should go, and rarely see the point of listening to what a human has to say, especially if it makes no sense to them.

Why are Jack Russells good around horses?

Jack Russells love horses, especially when those horses are moving. Jacks like to follow horses around the stable and on the trail. They seem to enjoy the company of equines, and horses seem to like them.

Another reason Jack Russells do so well around horses is that stables provide a lot of stimulation for these busy terriers, who always need something to do. Stables have rodents for hunting, and wide open areas to run. People who own horses tend to like Jack Russells because of the breed's toughness and limitless energy. A Jack Russell can follow a horse for miles on a trail ride without getting tired.

The Jack Russell's affinity for horses may also be genetic. Jack Russells were bred in part to run with foxhunters, who hunt on horseback. Being around horses seems to come naturally to their terriers. It could be that a love for horses is in their genes.

Why are Jack Russells good for people with active lifestyles?

People who hike, camp, fish, jog and bike ride on a frequent basis have the kind of lifestyle that best suits the tireless Jack Russell. The breed does best with these kinds of owners because the dog always has something to do and a way to burn energy. Likewise, people with active lifestyles really enjoy being with Jack Russell Terriers. Jacks can always keep up no matter how fast you are going or for how long you've been moving. Active people do not have to baby these dogs, and can be sure that their Jack Russell will be up for just about any outdoor activity they can come up with.

Why do Jack Russells have a cheerful demeanor?

They were simply bred to be that way. Jack Russells are cheerful, happy dogs, always looking for the next bit of fun. In fact, their pursuit of a good time can get them into trouble if they don't have enough to do. They will make their own fun, which might include digging up the backyard or chewing up the coffee table. Or chasing the cat, jumping up on the kitchen table and eating the turkey that is defrosting, tearing a hole through the closed doggy door to get outside and excavating a tunnel under the backyard fence and into the neighbor's yard, and so on.

Do Jack Russell Terriers make good apartment dogs?

Absolutely not. Many people think that because Jack Russells are small, they will do well in an apartment. The truth of the matter is that although they are small, they have too much energy to be confined to a small apartment, especially if there is no yard where they can play and be exercised. A typical Jack Russell Terrier will literally climb the walls of an apartment and go stir crazy. He is likely to start barking incessantly, destroying your furniture, knocking things off shelves and tables (Jack Russells are good jumpers), tearing the curtains off the windows and worse.

Do Jack Russell Terriers make good dogs for a home in the suburbs?

Not usually, unless you have a lot of time to spend exercising the dog. *A lot.* This means a few hours a day of hard exercise, like jogging and ball playing, to tire out a Jack. Don't think leaving the dog out in the backyard alone counts as exercise. You have to actively exercise him to make sure he is exerting himself and that his mind is stimulated. Since most people with jobs don't have that kind of time to devote to exercising a dog, it's not a good idea to have a Jack Russell in the suburbs.

If you try to make this work but don't give the dog enough exercise, he will likely tear up your garden, eat the garden hose, rip potted plants out of their pots, bark all day and worse.

What are 10 bad reasons to want a Jack Russell Terrier?

- 1. You want a nice, obedient dog like Eddie on *Frasier* or Wishbone on PBS.
- 2. You want a companion for your pet cat, rabbit or bird.
- **3.** You want a companion for your other small dog.

01 540890 Ch01.qxd 10/22/03 9:32 AM Page 11

What Exactly Is a Jack Russell Terrier? 11

- 4. You want a dog to hang out and watch TV with you.
- 5. You want a small dog who is easy to handle.
- **6.** You have never owned a dog before, and think a Jack Russell would be a good first choice.
- 7. You are not an experienced dog trainer, but want a dog you can teach to do all kinds of tricks.
- 8. You want a dog for your young children.
- **9.** You work all day, but think a small dog like a Jack Russell Terrier will do fine being at home alone all day while you are gone.
- **10.** You don't know much about the breed but are sure you want one because they are so cute.

But Eddie on *Frasier* and Wishbone on PBS are obedient. Why wouldn't my Jack Russell be?

Because you most likely don't have several hours a day to spend training and exercising your Jack Russell, nor do you have the expertise of a professional trainer. Also, these dogs might be well behaved while they are on TV, but their time in front of the camera is limited. The rest of the day, they are running around and being typical Jack Russell Terriers.

Why can't my Jack Russell be a companion for my pet cat, rabbit or bird?

Your Jack Russell doesn't see himself as a companion to small animals. He sees himself as hunter who was put on this earth to kill such creatures. Jacks are relentless when it comes to hunting, and view small animals as something to hunt, not play with. Your terrier will take one look at your rabbit or bird and begin trying to figure out how he can get to the animal to kill it. He may not attack your cat right away, but in time he will likely decide that kitty is prey too. At the very least, your Jack Russell will harass your small pets. At the worst, he will kill them. This is especially true of small rodents like hamsters, mice, rats, gerbils and guinea pigs. Never, ever expose a Jack Russell to these kinds of pets. Tragedy is sure to result.

Why shouldn't I get a Jack Russell as companion for my other small dog?

Generally speaking, Jack Russells don't really like other dogs. They view them as competition for food and attention. In the worst case scenario, the Jack Russell will decide to act on the notion that he'd prefer to be an only dog and will start fighting with your other dog to get him or her to submit. The fighting will escalate to the point of sure disaster, especially if the other dog is likely to fight back rather than be submissive and kowtow to the Jack Russell's every whim.

Most terriers don't get along with other dogs, but Jack Russells are particularly disagreeable in this regard. It doesn't matter how big the other dog is, either. Even though Jack Russells are small, they see themselves as large and often bully other dogs, both large and small.

In situations where a small dog does not back down quickly enough from a Jack Russell, that dog's life is in danger. Jack Russells have been known to kill small dogs, even dogs they have lived with for years.

Why aren't Jack Russells a good dog to hang out and watch TV with you?

Jack Russells have way too much energy to be couch potatoes. The only way a Jack Russell might be content to sit and watch TV with you is if it's nighttime and you spent the entire day making him run by throwing a ball to him for hours on end, or taking him along on a very long bike ride. Or if you live on a farm and your terrier has been outside hunting, climbing and digging all day, he might be willing to crash out on the couch in the evening. But these are the only scenarios where you'll have a Jack Russell behave in couch potato mode. More likely, you can expect your Jack Russell to be running around the house getting into trouble while you are trying to relax in front of the television.

The Jack Russell is a small dog, so wouldn't it be an easy dog to handle?

No. The Jack Russell's small size is deceptive. The Jack Russell is a big dog in a small body and has more energy and tenacity than most large breeds. Think of the Jack Russell as the Tasmanian Devil in the Bugs Bunny cartoons. Taz is small, but he's like a tornado. That is the Jack Russell Terrier.

Some people think that they can bully a small dog into behaving simply because that dog is smaller than they are. Jack Russells are surprisingly strong for their size, and can get nasty if they are treated roughly. Jack Russells won't hesitate to bite to defend themselves if someone is trying to push them around.

Why isn't the Jack Russell a good choice for a first dog?

Because Jack Russells are aggressive in nature, extremely active and hard to train. Most people who have never had a dog before are completely overwhelmed by a Jack Russell Terrier. If you are looking for a first-time dog, you are better off with a breed like the Labrador Retriever or the Golden Retriever. If you want a small dog who is easy to handle, try a Toy Poodle or Pomeranian. Trying to tackle a Jack Russell Terrier as your first dog is likely to make you give up dogs forever.

Why can't I teach my Jack Russell all kinds of tricks even though I'm not an experienced dog trainer?

Jack Russells are difficult to train. They don't listen well, and have their own ideas about what they should be doing with their time. In order to overcome this, you need experience and knowledge as a dog trainer. It takes plenty of creativity as a trainer to get a Jack's attention and keep it, and to convince a Jack Russell that he should listen to anything you say at all. (For more information, see Chapter 7, What's Involved in Training a Jack Russell Terrier?)

Why isn't the Jack Russell Terrier a good dog for young children?

Jack Russells don't put up with the kind of treatment young kids typically dish out. Small children often pull tails, tug on ears and step on paws, without realizing they are hurting the dog. Many dogs, like Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retrievers, will tolerate this kind of behavior because they sense that the small humans who are tormenting them are simply younger versions of adult humans and don't really know what they

are doing. Jack Russells don't see it that way, however. Jacks don't care how old the small human is and don't seem to recognize the innocence of a child. They simply will not put up with tail pulling and ear pinching and all the other things that small children do to dogs. They have no qualms about biting a small child to get the point of "leave me alone" across.

Can I leave a Jack Russell Terrier alone at all?

Only if you have him confined to a secure crate, and then not for more than a few hours a day. Plus, you can only do this if you have given the Jack Russell several hours of hard, interactive exercise before you leave. You will have to exercise the heck out of him when you come back, too, since he'll be raring to go once you let him out of that crate. (For more information about using a crate, see Chapter 7, What's Involved in Training a Jack Russell Terrier?)

Can't I just leave the Jack Russell outside while I'm not home?

Not unless you want your garden destroyed, your lawn furniture eaten, holes dug under your fence and angry neighbors who have been listening to loud barking for hours on end. Also, if you don't have a secure fence, your Jack Russell will quickly find a way to escape, whether that is over it, under it or around it.

Why shouldn't I get a Jack Russell because they are cute? Isn't that a good reason to get a breed?

It's tempting to get a dog because it's cute, but that's never a good reason alone to pick a breed. The way a dog looks is only a small part of who that dog is. Personality of the breed should be your uppermost concern if you want to live a happy life with your dog.

Jack Russells may look cute, but they are high-maintenance dogs who are difficult to train and manage. They might look like stuffed toys, but their appearance truly belies their personalities. They are tough, tenacious little dogs who are very difficult to handle.

What are the top 10 reasons people give up their Jack Russell Terriers?

- 1. "The dog destroys things in the house."
- 2. "The dog digs up the yard."
- 3. "The dog barks all the time when we're not home."
- 4. "The dog demands too much of our time and attention."
- 5. "The dog is not good with our children and other pets."
- 6. "The dog is disobedient and won't listen to us."
- 7. "We are moving, and can't take the dog."
- **8.** "We thought we were getting a small dog who would sit on our laps, but this dog won't sit still."
- 9. "The dog goes to the bathroom in the house."
- 10. "The dog keeps running away."

Why do people have all these problems with Jack Russells?

Because they didn't really know what kind of dog the Jack Russell was before they got one. Jacks are high-energy dogs who need a vast amount of exercise, stimulation and training. Most of the problems people have with Jack Russell Terriers are the result of poor planning on the part of the owners and a lack of training of the dogs. People just don't realize Jack Russells really are so active and hard to train. This breed is not for everyone. In fact, they aren't for most people. Most Jack Russell Terriers who are abandoned or surrendered to animal shelters were given up because the owners underestimated or simply didn't know how difficult life would be with one of these tenacious terriers.

Do Jack Russell Terriers bark very much?

Jack Russells bark when they are excited, when they are bored and when they are hunting. Seeing the mail carrier or even a kid riding a bike down

the street is usually enough to set off a lot of barking in a Jack Russell. Jack Russells left alone in the house or yard with nothing to do will bark out of sheer boredom and will do it loudly and obsessively. If a Jack Russell has cornered an animal when hunting, the dog will bark at that creature out of sheer excitement.

Why do Jack Russells bark so often?

They were bred to bark whenever they cornered their prey underground to let the hunter know their location. Jack Russells still retain that strong tendency to bark, and apply this tendency to many different situations.

Are Jack Russells hard to house-train?

Yes, they are often very difficult to house-train. They require a lot of patience as well as positive reinforcement like food or play to convince them they should go to the bathroom outside the house and not in it. The reason for this is that they simply march to their own drummer. A Jack Russell sees no reason to hold his urine or feces for when he's outdoors. Why not go in the house where it's most convenient? The fact that his owner doesn't appreciate soiled carpeting or a pile of poop in the living room doesn't really matter much to the typical Jack Russell Terrier.

In order to get a Jack Russell to see the wisdom of pottying outside, owners have to use a lot of rewards. Eventually, the Jack Russell will decide that going to the bathroom outdoors is more beneficial than doing it inside, because treats and/or play results when he does his business in the yard instead of in the house. In time, going potty outdoors will simply become a habit.

How big do Jack Russells get?

Jack Russells vary a lot in size, depending on the type of Jack Russell. The smallest members of the breed stand only about 10 inches at the shoulder.

The largest Jack Russells measure around 15 inches high. Small Jack Russells can weigh as little as 10 pounds, while larger individuals reach 15 pounds.

Page 17

Do Jack Russells shed?

9:32

01 540890 Ch01.qxd 10/22/03

Yes, they shed a lot. The broken-coated type of Jack Russell also requires professional grooming in order to keep his coat looking tidy.

What kind of coats do Jack Russells have?

This depends on the breed standard of each of the two Jack Russell Terrier clubs. The Parson Russell Terrier Association of America (PRTAA) recognizes a smooth-coated and a broken-coated Jack Russell. The PRTAA describes the smooth coat as coarse and waterproof, and flat but hard while being dense and abundant. The club describes the broken coat as a double coat that is coarse and waterproof, with a short, dense undercoat covered with a harsh, straight, tight "jacket" (the area covering the upper back and rib cage) that lies flat and close to the body and legs of the dog.

The Jack Russell Terrier Club of America (JRTCA) also recognizes a smooth coat, and describes it as smooth without being so sparse as not to provide a certain amount of protection from the elements and undergrowth (brush). They also recognize a rough or broken coat, and describe it as rough without being wooly.

What is a breed standard?

Each Jack Russell club has a blueprint of what a perfect Jack Russell Terrier should look like. Of course there is no such thing as a perfect Jack Russell or a perfect anything, but the standard provides something for breeders to shoot for.

The breed standard is used in dog shows to help the judge determine if the dog he or she is judging is a good example of the breed. A judge will look at the part of the breed standard that describes coat, for example, and then decide if the dog in the show ring adequately fits the description in the standard for coat.

Are Jack Russells friendly with strangers?

Not usually. In fact, they can be possessive of "their" people and property and can be aggressive toward strangers. This is not true of all Jack Russells, however. Some are happy to receive visitors, while others would just as soon chew up anyone who sets foot on their property.

Isn't being unfriendly toward strangers a good thing? I don't want someone to break into my house.

Jack Russells make good watchdogs, meaning they will bark long and loud if someone is approaching your house. That's good because they can alert you to an approaching stranger long before you would hear or see that person yourself. But Jacks don't always distinguish between someone you want in your house and someone you don't. Your Jack Russell is just as likely to bark like a maniac at your Uncle Fred from Iowa who is coming up the driveway to ring your doorbell as he would be at a criminal who is scoping out your house for a robbery. Know that this protective attitude about Uncle Fred may continue even after your uncle has come into your home with your permission. If your Jack Russell bites Uncle Fred or anyone else who comes to your home with your permission, you will be both embarrassed and legally liable.