

# **American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Rescue Trust**

## **Is A Rescue Cavalier The Right Dog For You?**

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### ***What is the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Rescue Trust?***

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Rescue Trust was organized to help homeless, abandoned and abused Cavaliers. All people involved in this organization are volunteers who dedicate their time, energy and resources to finding suitable home for homeless Cavaliers.

### ***What is a rescue Cavalier and where do they come from?***

Rescue Cavaliers come from a number of places. Some may come from shelters, others, through no fault of their own, need to find a new home due to the divorce, death, or incapacity of their owners. Others may come from people who have seen this cute little puppy in a pet store window and bought it on impulse, giving little thought to the fact that the puppy would have to be socialized, housebroken, trained, and will demand the attention of their owner.

As a rule, rescue Cavaliers are adults. We rarely get a Cavalier puppy in rescue. Rescue Cavaliers may have health problems, may need training, and most certainly demand your attention. These loving little dogs want nothing more than to be with their family. If you decide a rescue Cavalier is for you, they will reward your kindness with love and affection until the end of their days.

Since we never know what dogs will be coming into rescue, if you have a strong preference for color, sex or age, a rescue dog may not be for you. The more flexible you are about age, sex and color, the more likely you will be to make a suitable match.

### ***Are rescue Cavaliers readily available?***

The answer to that question is "no" - there are not always Cavaliers in rescue. Patience and determination, as well as keeping in contact with the rescue organization, is the best thing to do if you are determined to get a rescue Cavalier. It may take a long time, but it will be worth it.

### ***How can I adopt a rescue Cavalier?***

The most important thing to do before you decide to adopt, is to familiarize yourself with the breed. Go to a dog show or to the home of someone who already has a Cavalier and get to know the breed. There are many books on Cavaliers which can be purchased or ordered from any large bookseller. After doing your research if you still want a Cavalier rescue, please fill out the ACKCS Rescue Trust Preliminary Adoption Application and References form and send them to your local rescue chair. We are all volunteers and get many

inquiries each day; therefore you will not be immediately contacted when your application is received. It is very important that you keep your contact information current. This will allow us to contact you should a suitable Cavalier become available.

**Please remember that obtaining a rescue Cavalier may take a considerable length of time.** If you have not been contacted **within six months** after filing your application and are still interested in adoption a rescue Cavalier, you will need to file a new Preliminary Adoption Application and References form with your local rescue chair.

**Some things you should know about the Cavalier:**

*Size:* The average Cavalier is 12 to 13 inches tall at the shoulder and weight is between 13 and 18 pounds. However, you will find some smaller and some larger than this average size. The Cavalier is registered with the American Kennel Club as a member of the Toy Group.

*Personality:* Cavaliers are extremely people-oriented and want nothing more than to give and receive affection and attention. They need to be with their family. Because of this, some people find them to be demanding, so if you are not a person who likes a dog to kiss you on the lips, lick your ear, lie in your lap, sit next to you on the furniture, or share your bed, a Cavalier may not be the dog for you. Their greatest joy is to be with YOU.

As a rule, they get along well with other dogs and also cats. You must keep in mind, however, that they are a small spaniel, and most still have fairly strong hunting instincts. A gerbil, hamster, rat, or bird may not be safe.

Cavaliers do not tolerate extremes of heat or cold well. You must be sure that on hot days there is always a cool spot and plenty of water; on cold days always provide somewhere they can keep warm. Under no circumstances should a Cavalier be kept outdoors; they are house dogs.

*Training:* Cavaliers are generally not difficult to train because they want to please their owners. However, a rescue Cavalier may have some bad habits and/or issues due to their past treatment or environment and, as a result, may require retraining, which is a little more difficult. Housebreaking could be an issue with a rescue Cavalier, so if you cannot stand a few "accidents" while the training or retraining is in progress, you probably do not want a rescue dog.

*Health:* As with all breeds of dogs, Cavaliers do have some health problems. Some common health problems include mitral valve disease (MVD), luxated patellae, epilepsy, and syringomyelia (SM). Some of these conditions may not show up until the dog is older, and some dogs will never have them. If one of these conditions does exist or does develop, the dog may have to be under the

consistent care of a veterinarian and on medication for the rest of his/her life. Although no one can predict what the future may bring, when you adopt a rescue Cavalier, he/she will have had a full medical exam so you can be aware of the medical needs of the dog.

*Dental Care:* All Cavaliers need dental care. They should have their teeth brushed regularly and should have their teeth and gums evaluated by their veterinarian as part of their annual yearly checkup. Professional cleaning by a veterinarian may be indicated. If you do have your Cavalier's teeth professionally cleaned, always remember to put them on antibiotics one week prior to the cleaning and keep them on antibiotics for one week after the cleaning.

*Fences and Leashes:* Cavaliers MUST be kept in a securely fenced yard. The fence should keep the Cavalier in and neighborhood dogs out of your yard. Anytime you take your Cavalier out of the fenced area for a walk or romp, it MUST be on a leash. Cavaliers are extremely social and friendly and will run after another animal or a child or a bike, get into a car with anyone, or go into someone else's house. Cavaliers have no sense of danger and never learn to stay out of the street or that a large dog may not be friendly. They need your protection AND they need to be on a leash when out of the fenced area.

Invisible fencing is NOT recommended. It is not secure, and some Cavaliers will gladly endure the "zap" if they see children playing or see another dog they would like to meet. In addition, the invisible fence will not keep out other animals that could enter your yard and cause harm to your Cavalier.

For walking your Cavalier, you should have a thin 6' leather or nylon leash and a collar. Teach your Cavalier to walk at your side. NEVER, NEVER, NEVER use a pinch collar on a Cavalier.

*Correcting Your Cavalier:* Cavaliers do not respond well to harsh corrections; they are very sensitive and a stern "No!" is often all they will need. They are intelligent dogs and quickly respond to positive reinforcement. NEVER hit your Cavalier with your hand or with a newspaper or any other object. This will only make him fear you. Repetition, consistency, patience, kindness, and love are all you will likely need to train your Cavalier.

*Preparing To Adopt Your Rescue Cavalier:* There are some things you should purchase before bringing your new dog home:

- ★ High quality dog food from a pet supply store, preferably what the Cavalier has been eating while in foster care. (We typically use the Innova/Evo or California Naturals brands.)
- ★ 6' thin leather or nylon leash
- ★ Soft collar

- ★ Stainless steel bowls for food and water – unlike plastic or ceramics, stainless steel prevents the spread of many bacteria and viruses.
- ★ Safe toys – we do NOT recommend rope toys or toys with small parts (e.g., plastic eyes) that may fall off and choke the dog.
- ★ Soft doggie beds and crate pads
- ★ Crate - 27" long x 20" wide x 19" high
- ★ Training treats, e.g. Bil-Jacs or Mother Nature small biscuits
- ★ Snood – this cloth tube is placed over the Cavalier's head during mealtimes to keep the ears clean and out of the food.
- ★ Pin brush, mat comb, and finishing brush

*Books:* These are just two of the many books available that may be of help with your rescue Cavalier:

- ★ SECOND HAND DOG: HOW TO TURN YOURS INTO A FIRST RATE PET, by Carol Lea Benjamin
- ★ THE ADOPTION OPTION, by Shari Kalina

You should also read one or more of the many books specifically about the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel breed and about obedience training your dog.

*Donations:* The American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Rescue Trust does not sell dogs. We do ask for donations to help us with medical and rehabilitation expenses for unfortunate Cavalier. All Cavalier rescue dogs are taken to a veterinarian for a complete health work up. They are all spayed or neutered, brought up to date on their vaccinations and given dental work if needed. Depending on where the dog has lived, it may also have been tested for heartworm and put on heartworm preventative or other medicines.

When adopting a Cavalier, your donation of \$400.00 (\$200.00 for special needs or elderly dogs) helps us cover these expenses so that we can continue to help other Cavaliers in need.