

***Boston Terriers***  
FOR  
**DUMMIES®**

**by Wendy Bedwell-Wilson**



Wiley Publishing, Inc.



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## **Boston Terriers For Dummies®**

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## *About the Author*

Pets and their quirks have been a part of Wendy Bedwell-Wilson's life for as long as she can remember, but it was through her profession that she grew to truly appreciate them. After working in the publishing industry as a writer and editor for a variety of pet-themed trade, consumer, and online magazines for nearly 15 years, she ventured outside the cubicle and delved into writing professionally about four-legged friends from her home in Hawaii.

Her work has appeared in a range of pet publications, including *Pet Product News*, *Veterinary Practice News*, *DogChannel.com*, *Cat Fancy*, *Koi World*, *FAMA*, *Aquarium Fish*, *Cats USA*, *Kittens USA*, and the *Popular Pets* series. She completed one book — *Yorkshire Terriers* for the Animal Planet Pet Care Library series — before tackling *Boston Terriers For Dummies*. Her muses include a rescued Pointer-Hound mutt named Pete and two spoiled cats, Bubba and Benny. They're no Boston Terriers, but they're still little gentlemen.



## ***Dedication***

To my mother, Ruth Bedwell, the strongest woman I know.

## ***Author's Acknowledgments***

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# Introduction

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**I**f you've picked up this book, you're either considering whether to add a Boston Terrier to your life or you have already. Educating yourself is the first — and most important — step in becoming a responsible pet parent. Kudos to you for furthering your knowledge about the breed!

Learning about Boston Terriers, however, is just the beginning. After you encounter a Boston and get a feel for her good-natured personality, see how intelligent and devoted she is to her owner, understand her diverse and American-bred origins, and experience what a sheer delight she is to be around, you'll be hooked for life.

Making the most of your human-pet relationship involves not only educating yourself about what makes your dog tick, but also realizing how to nurture her and help her develop into the dog she was born to be: a devoted friend, wise companion, and all-around dapper dog.

## About This Book

This book serves as a reference guide for life with your Boston Terrier. Its purpose is twofold: First, it'll help you decide whether a Boston is the right breed for you and your family. Some families want a larger breed like a Labrador; others want a fluffy lapdog, like a Bichon Frisé. These pages break down the basics and give you enough practical insight to make an informed decision about whether a Boston will fit into your household.

Second, this book addresses some basic questions about the breed and general dog care. You'll find answers to questions like:

- ✔ Where did the breed originate, and why?
- ✔ What is a Boston's temperament like?
- ✔ How do I prepare my home for her arrival?
- ✔ Will a Boston get along with children and other pets?
- ✔ How do I houstrain my Boston?
- ✔ What are her basic nutritional and grooming requirements?
- ✔ What are some common health concerns associated with the breed?
- ✔ In case of a medical emergency, what do I do?

# Conventions Used in This Book

This book contains a lot of information, so to help you navigate through the text, I set up a few stylistic conventions, including:

- ✓ **Italics:** Italic type is used for emphasis and to highlight new words or terms that are defined.
- ✓ **Bold:** Boldfaced text is used to highlight points in a series and bring attention to key concepts.
- ✓ **Monofont:** Monofont is used for Web sites and e-mail addresses.

You'll notice one other convention, and that's the alternating use of masculine and feminine pronouns. With the help of my astute copy editor, I alternated between male and female, chapter by chapter. I'm not trying to give our four-legged friends human qualities; it just seems much more personable to use "he" and "she" rather than "it."

# What You're Not to Read

The information in this book ranges from the absolutely essential — like how to provide adequate nutrition for your Boston — to the not-so-important — like how handlers dress in the dog-show ring. You can find the necessary reading within the body of the book, but you can find the nonessential information in two places:

- ✓ **Sidebars:** The shaded boxes of text that appear throughout the chapters contain supplementary information you can skip or flip through later. It's interesting stuff, but it's not necessary.
- ✓ **Paragraphs highlighted with the Technical Stuff icon:** If you're the type who likes to know why or how, you'll appreciate the technical information contained in these paragraphs. You can, however, skip those nitty-gritty tidbits and still glean what you need to know about Bostons.

# Foolish Assumptions

As I wrote this book, I assumed several things about you and the type of information you'd be looking for:

- ✔ You either have a Boston or you're seriously thinking about adopting one.
- ✔ You're enamored with the breed and want to know more about its history, distinguishing characteristics, and care requirements.
- ✔ You've adopted your first Boston and you're not sure what specific things your dog will need.
- ✔ You have some experience with dogs, but you can use a refresher course in basic care and training.
- ✔ You're overwhelmed with all those doggy doodads that are out there and you're looking for some guidance.
- ✔ You're having difficulty with housetraining or obedience, and you're looking for practical advice.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

This book is put together in a logical way that allows you to find information quickly and easily. It contains five parts, each dedicated to a particular topic and broken down into several chapters that go into greater detail.

### *Part I: That Bullish Terrier*

This first part gives you a general overview of what to expect in this book, and it provides an overview of the breed's history and temperament. It describes where and how the dog originated, what a Boston needs, and what will be required of you and your family.

Ideally, you'll read the chapters in this part before you adopt your puppy so you know what you're getting yourself into! Deciding to add a Boston to your family is an important decision that will take some education. Part I is a great place to start.

### *Part II: Caring for Your Boston Terrier*

After you've decided to welcome a Boston into your life, you'll need to start thinking about how to care for her. This part guides you through how to puppy proof your home and yard, what products you'll absolutely need, how to provide for her nutritional needs, and how to keep her looking her best.

You'll also see the importance of setting up regular schedules for your Boston. Dogs are creatures of habit and like routine in their lives, from eating in the same place to going for walks at the same time every day. Part II will help you through the different routines to set up for your dog and your family.

## ***Part III: Stepping Out***

Well-trained and well-behaved dogs are a joy to be around. This part delves into how to mold your dog into a healthy and happy adult who thrives on being around humans and other dogs. You'll find out how to housetrain your dog. You'll understand the importance of proper socialization at all stages of her life. And you'll get an introduction to basic training, competition, and trial events.

Because your Boston will likely shadow you wherever you go — from the grocery store to Grandma's house — you'll want to keep her safe while traveling. Part III also outlines ways to restrain your dog in the car and how to prepare her for an airplane journey. If you can't take her with you, this section also describes how to find a reputable dog sitter or dog daycare center.

## ***Part IV: Health and Well-Being***

Perhaps the most important portion of the book, Part IV addresses health and well-being issues through all stages of your Boston's life. It offers guidelines for basic Boston care, including what to expect during your dog's first veterinary visit, breed-specific ailments, first aid, and senior care.

You'll also get an introduction to vaccinations, internal and external parasites, and details about the special needs of *brachycephalic* breeds (dogs with short heads), like your Boston. After reading this section, you'll have plenty to discuss with your veterinarian!

## ***Part V: The Part of Tens***

This part contains two chapters that give you fun facts about Boston Terriers. You'll find out ten interesting facts about the breed and discover ten ways to enhance your pet's life.

## Icons Used In This Book

A useful feature in the *For Dummies* series, icons draw your attention to — or away from — particular types of information. I use the following icons throughout the book:



This icon appears wherever a bit of advice can save you time, money, hassle, or stress.



This icon points out important information that's worth remembering.



When you see this icon, pay particular attention to the paragraph next to it. It highlights information about dangers that could cause your dog harm.



For those detail-oriented readers, the Technical Stuff icon indicates interesting but unnecessary information that you can skip.

## Where to Go From Here

Each chapter and part of this book is self-contained, so you can jump to just about anywhere and find complete information. Though you'll get a more well-rounded understanding of Bostons if you read the book from cover to cover, you don't have to, especially if you're looking for a certain topic, like how to housetrain your dog (Chapter 9), what to expect during your first veterinary visit (Chapter 14), where the breed originated (Chapter 2), or what kennel to purchase (Chapter 5). The Index will guide you to more specific topics.

A logical place to start, of course, is Chapter 1, which is a general overview of the book, and Chapter 2, which details the breed's history, standard, and temperament. Regardless of where you begin, however, you're about to embark on a new adventure — with your Boston!





# Part I

# That Bullish Terrier

The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave

By Rich Tennant



"To be fair, the people at the kennel said he liked to play, not that he was playful."

## *In this part . . .*

**B**efore you welcome a dog into your life, one of the first things you'll do is find out all you can about the different breeds. You'll research magazines, Web sites, and books like this one. You'll talk to breeders, dog club representatives, friends, and neighbors. You'll gather as much information as you can so that you will choose the right type of dog for your family.

In this first section of *Boston Terriers For Dummies*, you get an overview of the breed's history and temperament. It prompts you to take a look at your family's lifestyle, leading you to decide whether the Boston Terrier will make a fitting addition to your household. You also understand how to find a reputable breeder and how to identify the perfect pup for you.

You may find, after reading this first section, that a Boston isn't right for your family. Maybe you're looking for a larger breed or a petite lap dog. If that's the case, that's okay! It's better to decide that before you bring the puppy home. But if you breeze through this section and still want to share your life with a Boston, you're on your way to a life-changing experience!

# Chapter 1

# Welcome to Boston!

.....

## *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Exploring Boston Terriers' ancestors and canine appeal
  - ▶ Understanding a pup's basic needs
  - ▶ Realizing the importance of housetraining and obedience
  - ▶ Knowing how to care for his medical needs
- .....

**W**hen you think of a Boston Terrier, what picture pops into your mind? Perhaps you think of his unmistakable pug nose and pointy ears, his one-of-a-kind black-and-white tuxedo of a coat, or his endearing snorts and wheezes that trumpet his approach. Bostons pack a lot of personality in their small 15-pound bodies. It's no wonder why you're interested in this dapper little breed!

Before you invite a Boston to share your life, however, you should know a little bit about what makes these dogs tick. In this chapter, I describe why Bostons make such fantastic pets. I also offer pointers for how to care for their basic needs, from food and water to shelter and wellness.

## *Lovers, Not Fighters*

Boston Terriers earned the nickname "American Gentleman" for good reason: They're intelligent, affectionate, classy dogs who make excellent companions. With their amiable demeanor, it's hard to believe that their ancestors were originally bred to be fighters!

## *The early days*

Bostons are a blend of English Bulldogs and white English Terriers (now extinct). The first of these dogs was named Hooper's Judge, owned by Robert C. Hooper of Boston, Massachusetts. He imported the bulldog-terrier blend from his native England around 1870.

Early breeders in the United States admired the dog's look, so they refined and stabilized the breed, selecting for a smaller size, a likeable personality, and large expressive eyes. Eventually, they produced the American original that we know today.

These dogs enjoyed extreme popularity in the early 1900s. Placing first or second on the American Kennel Club's (AKC) list of registered breeds from 1905 through 1934, Boston Terriers were all the rage among fanciers and socialites alike. Over the past century, they've held a prominent position among the AKC's most popular dogs, consistently ranking among the top 20.

Today, Boston Terriers have made themselves at home in a range of households, from small apartments to large farms and everything in between. Though they retain hints of their terrier and bulldog ancestry, Bostons are unique, well-mannered dogs who bring joy to just about any home. To read more about the origins and breed standard of Boston Terriers, flip to Chapter 2.

## *Personality plus*

Ask any Boston owner to describe her dog, and you'll get nothing but praise. Boston owners love their dogs, and for good reason! They're highly intelligent, low maintenance, well-mannered, and ready for anything.

Here are some more reasons to love Bostons:

- ✔ **They're great with kids.** Most Bostons adore children. When children are taught how to behave around dogs, Bostons and kids become fast friends, with the dogs often enduring wrestling matches and playing dress-up without a hitch. Because they have such a solid constitution, these little dogs can handle just about anything that a child can dish out. Jump to Chapter 6 for details about how to introduce your child to a Boston.
- ✔ **They're great with adults.** Integrating well in any household, Bostons make attentive companions for adults and seniors, too. Some Bostons become good *therapy dogs*, well-behaved pups who travel to nursing homes and hospitals to bring joy to patients. Skip to Chapter 12 for details.
- ✔ **They're easy to care for.** A definite perk, Boston Terriers are simple to maintain. They have short coats that can be easily washed and brushed. (See Chapter 8 for more about grooming your Boston.) They don't require a great deal of energy-expending exercise. And they are very intelligent, taking to housetraining and obedience training quickly. (Hop to Chapter 9 and 11 for housetraining and obedience-training details.)

- ✔ **They're a relatively healthy breed.** Though they do have some difficulties stemming from their shortened snout, or being *brachycephalic*, Boston Terriers are healthy dogs. They often live 12 years, often reaching their 15th birthdays. (Chapter 15 describes some breed-specific ailments to watch for.)
- ✔ **They fit in just about any home.** Bostons are the perfect size for apartments, townhouses, or single-family homes. Because they don't require a large yard, they make wonderful house pets.
- ✔ **They get along well with other pets.** Being an easy-going breed, Bostons are happy to share their homes with other dogs, cats, or even a caged hamster or bearded dragon. As long as they are introduced slowly, they'll get along like siblings! (Chapter 6 covers introductions between four-legged friends.)
- ✔ **They're addictive.** Once you get one, you can't stop, or so many Boston owners attest. Prepare to add a second Boston to your menagerie shortly after you get your first!

## Why go purebred?

With all the homeless animals crowding shelters, you may ask yourself, why should I get a purebred dog when I can rescue a mutt? Purebred dogs have their advantages, including:

- ✔ **You can learn all about the breed before you bring him home.** Unlike a mixed-breed dog, purebred dogs have books like this one dedicated to them. You can read all about Bostons and get an idea of what they're like.
- ✔ **With a purebred dog, you have a good idea of what you're getting.** After researching about Bostons, you'll know how large the dog will grow to be. You'll be prepared for his playful personality. You'll be aware of any unique medical conditions the breed faces.
- ✔ **If you adopt your dog from a breeder, you also know the dog's lineage and pedigree.** You can trace the dog's ancestors and learn about her predecessors. You may have a grand champion in your family!
- ✔ **You'll benefit from breed-specific clubs and organizations dedicated to Boston Terriers.** Often, these clubs offer a forum for discussing health and behavior issues. You can learn about obedience courses and agility trials. Plus, it's a great place to socialize with other Boston lovers!

If you feel strongly about adopting a puppy or adult rescue, consider opening your home to a rescued Boston. Organizations across the country continually look for loving homes for special-needs or abandoned Boston Terriers, including: the Boston Terrier Club of America (<http://bostonterrierclubofamerica.org/rescue.html>), Boston Terrier Rescue ([www.btrescue.org](http://www.btrescue.org)), Boston Terrier Rescue Net ([www.bostonrescue.net](http://www.bostonrescue.net)), and Nationwide Boston Terrier Rescue Inc. ([www.nationwidebostonrescue.org](http://www.nationwidebostonrescue.org)).

## Give Me Shelter — And Food!

Like any pet, Boston Terriers require food and water, shelter, stimulation, and lots of love to thrive. The following sections touch on your pet's basic needs and how you can fill them.

### *Feed me!*

Because they're considered small dogs, Bostons don't require copious amounts of food, unlike their giant-breed cousins who can eat up to 5 cups of chow a day or more!

Bostons eat a lesser amount, so quality matters when feeding your dog. You need to provide a delicious diet that meets his nutritional needs, which include digestible protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals. Luckily, pet stores and veterinary offices offer more variety than ever before — from dry kibble and canned foods to holistic and prescription diets. You'll find a formula that you and your dog are happy with.

Chapter 7 gives you more-detailed nutrition know-how, but for now, here's a rundown of the different diets you can feed your Boston:

- ✔ **Dried kibble:** These crunchy little morsels are formulated to contain all the nutrition your Boston needs. They come in a wide range of flavors and formulas, and contain a variety of nutrition sources. Whatever you choose, make sure that it's a quality recipe that derives its protein, carbohydrates, and fats from easily digestible sources.
- ✔ **Semi-moist:** With a texture resembling moist clay, semi-moist foods also contain balanced nutrition. They contain higher water content than the dried kibble, but because of the higher sugar content, semi-moist foods can cause plaque and tartar buildup on a dog's teeth, which can lead to tooth decay. Semi-moist food is best served as a treat rather than daily.
- ✔ **Canned:** What dog doesn't love a meaty stew? Canned diets closely resemble "real" food. They're often packed with carrots, potatoes, chunks of meat, and lots of gravy. Canned diets provide complete nutrition, a good amount of water, and a tempting meal for finicky eaters.
- ✔ **Natural or organic:** Very popular diets to feed dogs, many natural formulas derive their ingredients from organic farms and often claim to contain "human-quality" ingredients. These foods can be excellent choices for your Boston, but only buy them from reputable sources.