

---

## NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

The FCI (Fédération Cynologique Internationale), the World Canine Organization, includes 86 member countries and contract partners (one member per country). Each issues its own pedigrees and trains its own judges. The FCI ensures that the pedigrees and judges are mutually recognized by all FCI members.

Recognition of a breed by the FCI means that in almost every European country, that breed can be awarded FCI championship prizes. One of the newly recognized breeds is the:

### **Russkiy Toy – Russian Toy (Terrier)**

The FCI uses the name Russian or Russkiy Toy (Русский Той-Терьер). The word “terrier” was dropped, since it was felt that the breed is solely a companion dog. The Russkiy Toy is classified in Group 9 (Companion and Toy dogs), Section 9 (Continental Toy Spaniels and Russian Toys). The original valid standard was published in 2006.

# RUSSKIY TOY

## Russian Toy (Terrier)

*text and illustrations by* **RIA HÖRTER**



*The ears are big, thin, set high and erect.  
This is a male's head.*

### **Black-and-Tan Terrier**

In 16th- and 17th-century England, terriers were considered a separate group of dogs with a number of similar characteristics. Their development took place in rather isolated areas of Great Britain and, at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, their general appearance reflected the work they were bred for and their environment.

Evidence of English terriers living in Russia is preserved in the Zoological Museum of St. Petersburg. In its collection of “Curiosities,” the museum owns a mummified black-and-tan terrier, about 14 inches (35 centimetres) at the withers, that lived from 1716-25. The inscription reads, “Dog of the sleek terrier breed, named Lisetta. Belonged to Peter the Great.” Peter the Great visited Europe and England in 1697-98 and westernized Russia by introducing European and English customs. Likely the Old English Black-and-Tan’s arrival in Russia was part of the general westernization.

*The FCI uses the name Russian or Russkiy Toy (Русский Той-Терьер). The word “terrier” was dropped, since it was felt that the breed is solely a companion dog.*

## NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

continued from page 178

### Prague Ratter

A dog fancier who doesn't immediately see the difference between a Russkiy Toy and, for example, an English Toy Terrier or Chihuahua, should not feel ashamed. An English Toy Terrier and a black-and-tan, smooth-haired Russkiy Toy look very much the same. Their size is especially misleading: 8 to 11 inches (20 to 28 centimetres) for the Russkiy Toy, and 10 to 12 inches (25 to 30 centimetres) for the English Toy Terrier.

The Prague Ratter (Pražský Krysařík), a small terrier in the Czech Republic not yet recognized by the AKC or FCI, is also similar to the Russkiy Toy. It is said that the Prague Ratter has existed since the Middle Ages. I did not find any connection with the Russkiy Toy, but looking at photos and knowing that the Czech Republic was a vassal state of Russia for decades, it's not difficult to conclude that the Prague terrier might have contributed to the development of a small black-and-tan terrier in Russia (or vice versa).



*English Toy Terrier, late 19th century, by British artist Benedict A. Hyland (1829-92)*

### Communism

Before the Russian Revolution in 1917, the English Toy Terrier was a popular breed in late-19th- and early-20th-century Russia, where English dogs and horses were favorites with the elite. Russian aristocratic ladies visited parties and theaters carrying small English Toy Terriers in their arms or in the sleeves of their coats. Eleven Toy terriers were exhibited at a dog show in St. Petersburg in 1907.

Although foreign pedigree dogs were associated with wealth and the aristocracy, which were denounced by communism, two English Toy Terriers and one Manchester Terrier were entered at a show in Moscow in 1923. At the 1924 show in Odessa, three Toy terriers won a medal, but almost 20 years later, in 1947, only one Toy terrier was entered at Leningrad.

Gradually, contacts abroad became sparse and, eventually, most of the dogs had no pedigree. When a small terrier similar to an English Toy Terrier was developed, it was not purebred.



*The Chihuahua contributed to the development of the longhaired Russkiy Toy. (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)*

### Political Situation

One would expect that the recent history of a young breed could be easily retrieved but, in this case, nothing is further from the truth. Because of the political situation at the beginning of the 20th century and the Iron Curtain erected in 1945, there was no free contact between Russia and the West. Descendants of the pure or not-so-pure English Toy Terriers developed in isolation into a more-or-less local breed, the Russkiy Toy.

When contact with the West was re-established, some Russian breeders were shocked. As much as they had tried to preserve this and other breeds, sometimes the differences between the dogs in Russia and those in the West were huge. A pragmatic solution was chosen for the Toy terrier. Descendants of English Toy Terriers bred in Russia were considered a separate breed, and a new national breed was born with the prefix "Russkiy."

### Extra Handicap

The breeding of pedigree dogs experienced a revival during the 1990s thanks to glasnost (openness) and perestroika (reformation). However, Russia's vast size proved to be a handicap for breeders trying to locate dogs that could contribute to the restoration of the type that had existed before the Second World War. At that time, the Toy terrier was bred predominantly as a small guard dog and companion. Although small of stature, he sticks up for himself when something is wrong. In Russia, the breed's nickname is "living alarm."

### Isolation

It wasn't just the purebred English Toy Terriers that disappeared in Russia. Between 1920 and 1950, the number of look-alikes diminished dramatically as well, but in the mid-1950s, Toy terriers started to show an upward trend. Most of the population in the Soviet Union is urban. Small dogs are very suitable as companions in small apartments, and are less



*Until the 1990s, the Russkiy Toy was almost unknown outside Russia. Note the big ears and erect tail on this black-and-tan male.*



## NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

continued from page 180



*The longhaired variety came about more or less by happenstance.*

expensive to keep than bigger dogs.

Seventy-six Russkiy Toys were entered at a dog show in Moscow in 1960. (Other sources mention about 100 in 1967, also in Moscow.) The dogs came from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg (in the Urals), Novosibirsk (in Siberia) and Alma-Ata (Kazakhstan). They all had a pedigree or at least a piece of paper with information about their origin but, because of their isolated development, there was a substantial difference in appearance. Breeders realized that a standard should be written for their breed.

### Smooth-Haired and Long-Haired

The English Toy Terrier (called the Miniature Black-and-Tan Terrier in England prior to 1960) was the ancestor of the Russkiy Toy; however, there are substantial differences between the two breeds.

The Russkiy Toy is long-legged, the English Toy's legs are proportionate. The Russkiy Toy's head is small compared to the body, with a clearly pronounced stop. The English Toy's head is proportionate, long and narrow, with a slight stop. Its ears are candle flame in shape with slightly pointed tips, and placed high on the back of the skull. The Russkiy Toy's ears are big, thin, set high, and erect.

The eyes are different as well. The English Toy's are dark to black, relatively small, almond-shaped and not prominent. Russkiy Toy eyes are quite large, rounded, dark, slightly prominent and set well apart, and look straight ahead.

Unlike the English Toy Terrier, the Russkiy Toy has two coat varieties: smooth-haired and longhaired. The English Toy has only one accepted color: black and tan. The Russkiy Toy comes in black and tan, brown and tan, blue and tan, as well as any shade of red, with or without black or brown overlay.

### "Spectacular Fringes"

Of the two coat varieties, the smooth-haired is the oldest; the longhaired variety came about more or less by happenstance. When two smooth-haired Russkiy Toys were bred in 1958 – one with a slightly longer coat than the other and, the story goes, one with no pedigree – the result was Chikki (or Chicky), born on October 12, 1958. As he matured, Chikki developed "spectacular fringes" on his ears, neck and legs. Chikki was bred to Irma, a smooth-haired bitch that had a little more coat than usual. The subsequent litter included three longhaired puppies, thus founding the longhaired variety.

At first, the longhaired were called Moscow Longhaired Toy Terriers or Moscow Miniature Longhaired Terriers; these names are still sometimes used.

The story about Chikki and Irma has several versions. It is, however, indisputable that Chikki became a popular stud dog.

### A Remarkable Personality

Yevgueniya (Eugenia) Fominichna Zharova was the Moscow breeder who played such an important role in the development of the longhaired variety. For a while, some fanciers wanted to name this variety the Zhar Terrier after her.

Zharova was a remarkable personality. Born in Irkutsk in 1921, she moved to Leningrad, studied at the Technical University in Helsinki for a short time, as well as music and drama in Moscow, and wrote magazine articles about circus life. In the 1950s, Russian circuses used small dogs in their acts, mainly Pinschers and Chihuahuas, often not purebred.

In 1956, Zharova received two small dogs as a gift from the Moscow Circus. Some writers claim that she used them in her breeding of the longhaired Russkiy Toy, but others deny it.

After 1956, Zharova imported two Chihuahuas that were used at least twice in her breeding program. Today, one can still see Russkiy Toys of a Chihuahua type. Zharova became a show judge and mentored new breeders, and in 1966 helped write the first breed description. She passed away in 1996 and is remembered as being "civilized, smart, stubborn" and "the mother of the longhaired Russkiy Toy."



*Eugenia Zharova with a Chihuahua, the breed she used in her longhaired Russkiy Toy breeding.*

### Assumptions, Rumors and Recognition

There is little information available about Zharova's breeding, mainly because her use of other people's dogs was the subject of assumptions and rumors. After her death, some documentation was passed along by her family to a well-known Moscow kennel, Bravo Zhadar, owned by Irina Polovinkina.

There are still opponents of the longhaired variety because, in their opinion, it resembles the Papillon too much. Was this breed also used by Zharova? Nevertheless, despite criticism and setbacks, 24 longhaired Russkiy Toys were exhibited at a Moscow dog show in June 1964.

## NEW DOG BREEDS RECOGNIZED BY THE FCI

*continued from page 182*

The official breed standard was drawn up in 1965-66 – for both varieties – under the auspices of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture. Crossing the two varieties is permitted, so it's possible to get long-haired and smooth-haired puppies in the same litter. By 1968-69, there were already about 300 of the longhaired variety entered in the Russian studbook – a remarkable number for a breed with small litters. National recognition for both varieties followed in 1981. There have been various revisions to the standard; the most recent dates from July 2006.

### International Interest

Apart from Russia, Belarus, Moldavia and the Ukraine, there are now breeders in the Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Germany, the Baltic States, Scandinavia, England, Ireland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Canada and the U.S.

In 2011, the Russian Toy Club of America ([russiantoyclub.org](http://russiantoyclub.org)) merged with the Russian Toy Club of USA to work toward AKC recognition of the breed. To this end, the RTCA as well as the Russian Toy Dog Club of America, Inc. ([russkiytoyclubofamerica.com](http://russkiytoyclubofamerica.com)) are working with the American Kennel Club's Foundation Stock Service® (FSS®) to promote the breed and educate the public about the Russkiy Toy. The longhaired Russkiy Toy first arrived in the States in the 1990s; today, there are an estimated 250 in the U.S. Approximately 145 are registered with the AKC FSS®.

Although still a rare breed, there were 113 Russkiy Toys at the 2009 World Dog Show in Bratislava – 56 smooth-haired and 47 longhaired.

### Something From the Breed Standard

The Russkiy Toy faces the same problems as any other new breed, and it's obvious that there are still huge differences in type. Some resemble Papillons, others Chihuahuas.

Its general appearance is that of a small, square-built, elegant and lively dog, long-legged, with fine bones and lean muscles. In temperament, the breed is active, very cheerful, neither cowardly nor aggressive.

The muzzle is pointed and slightly shorter than the skull. The Russkiy Toy's eyes are quite large, round, dark, slightly prominent



*Longhaired black-and-tan Russkiy Toy at the European Dog Show in the Netherlands, 2011 (Photo: Ria Hörter)*



*A red, smooth-haired Russkiy Toy*

and set well apart. The ears are big, thin, set high and erect. The neck should be long, lean, carried high and slightly arched.

The topline slopes gradually from the withers to the root of the tail; the back is strong and straight. The oval chest is sufficiently deep and not too wide. The tucked-up belly and drawn-up flanks form a nicely curved line from chest to flanks.

In countries where docking is still allowed, the tail is short (two or three vertebrae) and carried high. An undocked tail should be carried as a sickle tail.

### Smallest Breed in the World

The long front legs are straight and parallel, the bone thin and fine. Forefeet are strong and oval, the hind feet arched and a bit narrower than the forefeet. The muscles of the upper and lower thighs are lean and developed.

The Russkiy Toy's movement is easy, straightforward and fast, with no noticeable change in the topline.

The coat is described in detail in the standard, as are the permitted colors. Blue and tan is the rarest color.

Males and females are of the same size: between 8 and 11 inches (20 to 28 centimetres) with a tolerance of one-third inch (one centimeter) either way, and up to 6-1/2 pounds (three kilograms). The Chihuahua is said to be the smallest breed in the world. Russian breeders point out that the Russkiy Toy – when just under eight inches (20 centimetres) at the withers – could claim that title.

Timid behavior, a level bite, semi-erect ears, a low-set tail, and small white spots on the chest and toes are some of the faults. Eliminating faults are aggression or over-shyness, an overshot or pronounced undershot bite, hanging ears, short legs, many bald patches on smooth-haired dogs, and curly hair or absence of ear fringes on longhaired dogs. More than 12 inches (30 centimetres) or less than 7 inches (18 centimeters) at the withers is also an eliminating fault.

The breed is subject to patella luxation and epilepsy. It is said that epilepsy could be an over-reaction to the rabies vaccine.

The breed standard can be found at [fci.be](http://fci.be). It's interesting to compare it to that of the Chihuahua.

*We have tried to find the names of all photographers. Unfortunately, we did not always succeed. Please send a message to the author ([www.riahorter.com](http://www.riahorter.com)) if you think you are the owner of copyright.*