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Bear hunt in Estonia

## Hunting Dogs

### *From hunters to pets*

Many dog breeds are no longer what they used to be: Poodle's origin is linked to a breed of dogs for slough hunt, while the Dalmatian race has its origin in an ancient breed of beagle. A classification of the hunting dogs proves to be difficult. The Hungarian Vizsla is seen as a sighthound, perhaps due to one of its ancestors. Generally, the hunting dogs are divided into hounds (sighthounds, scent hounds and lurchers) and gun dogs (compassing retrievers, setters, spaniels, pointers and water dogs). Sighthounds are still used for hunting in some countries, but nowadays pointers are the best for this, especially the English Pointer, English Setter, Irish Setter, German Longhaired Pointer, German Shorthaired Pointer, Spinone Italiano. Spaniels are increasingly popular as pet breeds, like English Cocker Spaniel, or Springer Spaniel. The retrievers, like Labrador or Golden Retriever have also become popular. Amongst scent hounds, there are also breeds that hunt in groups, either small, accompanied by the pedestrian hunter, like Beagle, Basset Hound, Basset Artesien Normand or in numerous packs, the famous "chasse a courre", like Foxhound. Scent hounds can be extremely varied, compassing many breeds with a specialization and geographical distribution extremely limited, like the Brazilian Terrier (best for hunting jaguars), Tahltan Bear Dog (an extinct Canadian breed used by Indian hunters for hunting bears, lynx and porcupine), Jamthund and Lundehund, Norwegian breeds mainly used for hunting moose and also for searching puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) eggs. But scenthounds too can be local and specialized, like the Australian Kangaroo Dog for hunting kangaroos, or Spanish Galgo for hunting rabbits. The terriers are a special category of hunting dogs. They are used almost exclusively for hunting mammals. Terriers are usually used to locate the den, set, or living space of the target animal and then bolt, capture, or kill the animal by means of force. Jack Russel Terriers are used to hunt ground hogs and foxes in the United States and Fell Terriers hunt fox and badger (not always legally) in the United Kingdom. Mixed breeds of terriers have given rise to fighting breeds like Bull Terrier.