



**Heartland Animal Shelter**  
2975 Milwaukee Ave.  
Northbrook, Illinois 60062  
Tel 847-296-6400  
Fax 847-296-4198  
www.heartlandanimalshelter.net

## Dog Adoption – Rat Terrier Traits – Rat Terrier Adoption

*Rat Terriers are happy, friendly dogs that like most people. They somewhat resemble the more popular Jack Russell Terrier but have a calmer, more sensitive temperament. If you're thinking about Rat Terrier adoption, you should understand a few things about the breed.*

- **Rat Terriers as hunters** - Rat Terriers were common American farm dogs in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, where they were used as vermin killers and hunting companions. Because they were bred to hunt, a common Rat Terrier trait is that they may chase small animals. If you are considering a Rat Terrier adoption, be aware that many are escape artists that can climb and jump fences.
- **Rat Terriers with other dogs** - Rat Terriers are generally friendly with other dogs. However, one Rat Terrier trait that can be a bit unsettling at first is their vocal play style which includes lots of growling and snarling.
- **Rat Terriers with children** - Rat Terriers usually get along with children, especially those in their own family. If you are thinking about a Rat Terrier adoption, consider that they like to keep busy and learn new things. They may, however, be sensitive to unexpected noises and activities, so children need to adapt their play to the individual dog's personality.
- **Rat Terriers just want to have fun** – One of the best Rat Terrier traits is that they are fun-loving dogs that like a lot of attention from their families. Keep in mind before a Rat Terrier adoption that they are happiest when they receive lots of mental stimulation and exercise. They do, however, have an “off switch” and will happily curl up on a lap after playtime.
- **Rat Terriers as watch dogs** - Rat Terriers, like many terriers, are good watchdogs. They are friendly towards people but may be protective, and aloof or reserved with strangers.
- **Rat Terriers love attention** – Another positive Rat Terrier trait is that they are not generally yappers or barkers. However, they can be demanding of human attention. They have a pack instinct and do better with company, whether human or animal; and some dogs may have problems with boredom or separation anxiety if left alone for long periods of time.
- **Rat Terriers are intelligent and love a challenge** - Rat Terriers are active, intelligent dogs that do well at obedience training. One of the Rat Terrier traits tied to their intellect is that they are eager to learn and to please their people. When planning a Rat Terrier adoption, remember that they are playful dogs that generally enjoy dog performance sports such as agility. All in all, they make great canine companions.



Information sources: [Dogs for Kids: Everything You Need to Know About Dogs](#) by Kristin Mehus-Roe; [The Illustrated Directory of Dog Breeds](#) by Juliette Cunliffe; Rat Terrier Club of America; RatTerrierResG.com; Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia.

###