

Dach-Facts: Double Dapple Health Risks

Health & Welfare Information from the
Dachshund Breed Council



Dachshund Colours

The Dachshund Breed Standard states:

All colours permitted but no white permissible, save for a small patch on chest which is permitted but not desirable. The dapple pattern is expressed as lighter coloured areas contrasting with the darker base. Neither the light nor the dark colour should predominate. Double dapple (where varying amounts of white occurs all over the body in addition to the dapple pattern) is unacceptable. Nose and nails black in all colours except chocolate/tan and chocolate/dapple where they are brown.

What is Dapple?

Dapple in Dachshunds is the same in appearance, and genetically, as the “merle” found in Collies, Australian Shepherds and some other breeds. Strictly speaking, it is a **pattern**, rather than a colour.

It appears like a slashing or swirling of paint over all normal Dachshund colours. Some dappling is very bright and noticeable. Other dogs have so little of the dapple pattern that it is not easily seen. You will recognise a dapple Dachshund most easily when it is on one of these base colours:- Black & Tan, Red or Chocolate & Tan. One parent must be dapple to get dapple puppies.

What is Double Dapple?

Double Dapple is the colour of a dog that is the result of mating two Dapple Dachshunds together. Double Dapple puppies will **always** have white markings, many in the same pattern that you would associate with a collie-type dog (band around the neck, white on paws, nose, and tail tip). A Double Dapple Dachshund usually has blue eyes, but may have one or both dark eyes.

Double Dapple Health Risks

There are lethal genes commonly associated with Double Dapple. The problems associated with the lethal genes in Double Dapples are varying degrees of vision and hearing loss, including missing eyes or “micro eyes”. Blindness and/or deafness can be caused by the Double Dapple

gene combination.

Remember that Single Dapple Dachshunds **do not** have these lethal health problems.

Advice for Breeders

The gene for Dapple is dominant over the gene for Non-Dapple. So, it doesn't matter how many Dapples there are in a pedigree, you still have to have one Dapple parent to get any Dapple puppies.

Given the potential health risks associated with Double Dapples, it is considered irresponsible and unacceptable to mate two Dapples together. The Kennel Club will not register puppies from two Dapple parents.

A Dachshund is considered to be a Dapple even if it has only one tiny dappled patch on it. Such dogs should still be registered as Dapples, because they **will** produce some dapple puppies when mated to a non-dapple dog.

Remember that Single Dapple Dachshunds do not have lethal health problems and if a Single Dapple is mated to a solid colour (any non-dapple) there are no such problems associated with Single Dapple Dachshunds.

Advice for Puppy Buyers

Do not be misled by adverts offering “*Rare Coloured Dachshunds*” such as Double Dapple or Piebald. These colours are not acceptable and, as we have said above, there are serious health risks associated with the Double Dapple pattern. You cannot be certain what risks to the health of puppies have been taken by breeders who claim to be breeding “Rare Colours”. You should also avoid buying from breeders who advertise “All Colours Available”. Reputable breeders will not claim the colours of their Dachshunds are “rare”. They will be breeding in accordance with the Breed Standard and their primary concern will be for the health and welfare of the puppies they produce.

Where to find out more

Visit www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk for details of health and welfare issues, plus the latest information and advice.