

# Dachshund Colors & Patterns



## Color

The color of a dog is determined by their genetic makeup of what pigments are expressed. There are only two basic pigments that determine color—black & red. White hair is when no pigment is produced. All the variations of color are created by genes that can modify them and change the depth of color.

The base (self) colors that are mentioned in the Dachshund Club of America (DCA) “Standard” are: Red, Cream, Black & tan, Chocolate & tan, Wild Boar\*, Gray (Blue) and Fawn (Isabella).

The following is a simplified chart of how the base colors of Red and Black & Tan are carried in dachshunds. These are the most common colors in Smooth & Longhair Dachshunds. Some Red dogs can only produce the color Red (homozygous) and some Red dogs carry the recessive Black & Tan gene (heterozygous). These are the color possibilities when bred together:

Parent	Red - Homozygous (RR)	Red – Carries B&T (Rb)	Black & Tan (bb)
Red – Homozygous (RR)	<b>Red</b> (RR)	<b>Red</b> (RR or Rb)	<b>Red</b> (Rb)
Red – Carries B&T (Rb)	<b>Red</b> (RR or Rb)	<b>Red or Black &amp; Tan</b> (RR, Rb or bb)	<b>Red or Black &amp; Tan</b> (Rb or bb)
Black & Tan (bb)	<b>Red</b> (Rb)	<b>Red or Black &amp; Tan</b> (Rb or bb)	<b>Black &amp; Tan</b> (bb)

Note: The colors Gray (Blue) & Fawn (Isabella) mentioned in the Standard are both dilutes of Black & Chocolate, respectively. These dilutes may also be associated with health issues, such as thin coats, skin sensitivity, vaccine failures and reduced lifespan.



Red Standard Longhair



Black & Tan Standard Smooth



Red Miniature Wirehair

Chocolate & Tan  
Miniature Smooth



# Dachshund Colors & Patterns, continued



## Patterns



Black & Tan Dapple  
Miniature Longhair



Chocolate & Tan Dapple  
Miniature Smooth

**Dapple** – As with other patterns, the base color is listed first. Often a Black & Tan Dapple is mistakenly referred to as a ‘Silver’ Dapple. Red Dapples exist but can be difficult to identify- sometimes you may only tell at birth whether a Red carries the Dapple gene as the dappling on a Red may quickly fade visually.

This is extremely important for those breeders who breed Dachshunds with the Dapple gene, as breeding two dogs that both carry Dapples can result in “Double Dapples”. Double Dapples are more likely to carry health issues such as deafness, reduced eye size or missing eyes. Double Dapples are usually marked asymmetrically, have large areas of white (especially feet, belly and sides) and never have tickling. Most breeders only breed Dapples to Black & Tan (or Chocolate & Tan) to avoid the possibility of misidentifying a Red Dapple that may be doubled up on accidentally.

**Piebald** – The pattern is white spotting over the dog’s base (self) color. Piebalds will never have blue eyes or eye ticking, and typically have symmetrical markings on the head (with or without a white blaze), a white tipped tail and may have freckling. Disqualifications for this pattern are blue eye(s), >50% white on head, white on any part of the ears/around the eyes or a pure white body.

The Piebald pattern can be carried through generations before being expressed.



Piebald Miniature  
Smooth and Longhair

# Dachshund Colors & Patterns, continued



**Wild Boar** - Although Wild Boar is referred to as a color in the DCA breed standard, it's more likely a pattern in Dachshunds, seen most typically in Wirehaired Dachshunds (and sometimes in Smooths). It appears as a banding of individual hairs with the base (self) color closest to the skin. The banding gives the impression of an overall grizzled effect.



Wild Boar  
Standard Wirehairs



Sable Miniature Longhair

**Sable** – Like Wild Boar, Sables have banded color hairs with the base color (self) closest to the skin. Sables are thought to share the same gene as the Wild Boars. Red Longhairs with a dark overlay are often mistaken as Sable. A true Sable must have a Sable parent and the individual hairs will be banded with two colors.

**Brindle** – The pattern appears as darker stripes over the base color. At least one parent must be Brindle to produce this pattern.



Brindle Miniature Smooth

DNA testing can be helpful in identifying a dog's color or pattern, especially when being used for breeding purposes.

Compiled by Sandy Arnold - September 2020

Sources:

- **An Explanation of Colors and Patterns in Dachshunds** by Sandy Russell
- **Genetics Basics – Coat Color Genetics in Dogs** by Lynne Buzhardt, DVM
- **Inheritance of Coat Color in Dogs** by Clarence C. Little, Sc.D. (1988)