

Understanding Single-Coated Dogs (e.g., Poodles)



What Is a Single Coat?



Single-coated dogs have just one layer of hair—usually a soft, dense, and curly or wavy coat that lacks an undercoat. In breeds like the Poodle, this coat grows continuously and doesn't shed seasonally the way double coats do.

Coat Genetics: The Role of Furnishings

Poodles have a “furnished” coat, a genetic trait marked by the presence of eyebrows, mustaches, and a beard. This is controlled by the **RSPO2 gene**, which carries a dominant allele for furnishing (F). The presence of at least one copy of this gene (F/_) results in a furnished coat.

- **Furnished coat (F/F or F/f):** Seen in Poodles and many Doodles. Marked by long facial hair and dense curls.
- **Unfurnished coat (f/f):** Lacks facial furnishings; the coat appears more smooth or flat, common in breeds like the Vizsla or Weimaraner.

Correct vs. Incorrect Coat Types

-  **Correct coat (curly, dense, single layer, furnished):** Water-resistant, low-shedding, and typically hypoallergenic.
-  **Incorrect coat (unfurnished, thin, sparse, or with inconsistent curl):** Can cause grooming issues, poor insulation, or unexpected shedding.

Improper coat texture in mixed breeds like some Doodles can result in a “false promise” of hypoallergenic traits while shedding and matting more than expected.


Coat Function and Insulation

A Poodle's single coat provides insulation by trapping air between dense curls, regulating body temperature. The curls repel water and dirt and protect from both cold and moderate heat.

However, without a second insulating undercoat, they may be more vulnerable in extremely cold conditions unless properly dried and protected after wet outings.

Hypoallergenic Status

Poodles are often labeled “hypoallergenic,” but this is a partial truth. No dog is completely hypoallergenic. Poodles shed less, which means less dander and hair is released into the environment. But allergy sufferers can still react to:

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- **Dander:** Dead skin cells that flake off into the environment.
 - **Saliva:** Contains proteins (Can f 1, Can f 2) that are common allergens.
 - **Urine:** Also contains allergenic proteins, but exposure is rarer.

Because Poodles shed minimally, dander tends to stay on the dog's coat rather than spreading throughout the home. Regular grooming and bathing help keep allergen levels low.

Grooming and Maintenance

Poodles require regular brushing and trimming every 4–8 weeks to prevent matting and keep allergens low. Because the hair continues to grow, it needs human intervention to stay healthy and comfortable.

Understanding the Aussiedoodle Coat – Genetics, Grooming, and Allergies

The **Aussiedoodle**—a cross between an **Australian Shepherd** and a **Poodle**—is an intelligent, affectionate, and energetic hybrid that often boasts a beautiful, fluffy coat. But with this mixed breed comes a wide range of coat possibilities, from tight Poodle curls to loose Aussie waves—and everything in between. Understanding the genetics, structure, and maintenance of the Aussiedoodle's coat is essential for breeders, owners, and allergy-sensitive families.

Coat Structure: What Kind of Coat Does an Aussiedoodle Have?

Because Aussiedoodles are hybrids, their coats do **not follow a single predictable pattern**. They inherit traits from both parents and may display:

- **Curly single coats** (like a Poodle)
- **Wavy or loose curls** (a blend of both)
- **Straight or shedding double coats** (like an Aussie)

There is no “standard” Aussiedoodle coat—it's a spectrum influenced by genetic inheritance and the specific generation of the dog (F1, F1b, etc.).

Coat Genetics in Aussiedoodles

Several genes determine the coat's **texture, length, furnishings**, and **shedding tendency**:

1. Furnishings (RSPO2 gene)

- **Furnished (F/_)**: Typical of Poodles; long facial hair like mustache, eyebrows, and beard.
- **Unfurnished (f/f)**: More like the Aussie; clean-shaven face.
- **Aussiedoodles may carry one or two copies of F.**
 - F1 Aussiedoodles (50/50 mix) typically have one copy: furnished but variable.
 - F1b Aussiedoodles (75% Poodle) often carry two: more Poodle-like coat.

2. Coat Curl (KRT71 gene)

- **CC (straight), CT (wavy), TT (curly)**
 - Straight (from Aussies) = shedding coat
 - Curly (from Poodles) = non-shedding
 - Wavy = unpredictable shedding; high maintenance

3. Shedding (MC5R, RSPO2, etc.)

- Dogs with low-shedding genotypes tend to have tighter curls and thicker single coats.
- High-shedding dogs may express double coats and seasonal blowouts.

Correct vs. Incorrect Coats in Aussiedoodles

Since this is a designer breed without an official standard, “correct” is subjective—but from a **health and grooming perspective**, here's what to look for:

Desirable Coats:

- Furnished face
- Wavy to curly coat that resists shedding
- Dense, single coat with even texture
- Soft but strong hair shaft, low matting tendency

Undesirable Coats (for allergy-sensitive homes or low-maintenance goals):

- Unfurnished face (sheds more)
- Straight, shedding double coat (like purebred Aussies)
- Patchy curl patterns or “open fleece” coat
- Cottony or sparse coats that mat easily and trap dirt

Improperly bred Aussiedoodles may combine the worst of both coats—excessive matting AND shedding—which can be frustrating for owners expecting a “hypoallergenic” pet.

How Aussiedoodles Stay Warm (or Cool)

Depending on their coat type, Aussiedoodles insulate differently:

- **Curly/single-coated Aussiedoodles** (more Poodle-like): Use tightly coiled hair to trap body heat in winter. In summer, the coat insulates against external heat by slowing air exchange. However, if matted or overgrown, it may **overheat the dog**.
- **Wavy/double-coated Aussiedoodles** (more Aussie-like): Use a downy undercoat to trap warmth and a protective outer coat to repel water and dirt. These dogs shed seasonally and may be more weather-resistant but not hypoallergenic.

Shaving double-coated Aussiedoodles is discouraged unless medically necessary, as it can damage the coat’s regrowth and interfere with natural insulation.

Are Aussiedoodles Hypoallergenic?

Many people seek Aussiedoodles because they believe they are hypoallergenic—but **this depends entirely on the dog’s genetic makeup**. Here's what affects allergies:

Factors that reduce allergens:

- Furnished face (less saliva spread through grooming)
- Tight curls (traps dander and limits environmental spread)
- Low shedding

Factors that increase allergens:

- Unfurnished face (spreads saliva)
- Loose or shedding coat (spreads dander and hair)
- Large size and high activity (more dander/saliva exposure)



Even the most hypoallergenic Aussiedoodle can still trigger allergies due to:

- **Dander:** Microscopic flakes of dead skin, often trapped in hair
- **Saliva:** Contains Can f 1 and Can f 2 proteins, primary allergy triggers
- **Urine:** Also contains allergens, but exposure is less common indoors

Important: Even a low-shedding Aussiedoodle can trigger allergies in sensitive individuals. It's not about the hair—it's about the **proteins** carried on it.

Grooming Needs of Aussiedoodles

All Aussiedoodles—regardless of coat type—require **regular grooming**. Their coat doesn't self-maintain and can become severely matted if neglected.

For curly or wavy Aussiedoodles:

- **Brushing:** 3–5x/week minimum
- **Professional grooming:** Every 4–8 weeks
- **Tools:** Slicker brush, metal comb, detangler spray

For straighter-coated Aussiedoodles:

- **Brushing:** 2–3x/week, more during shedding
- **Deshedding tools:** Undercoat rake or grooming blower
- **Avoid shaving:** Preserves the protective topcoat

Matted coats can trap moisture, harbor bacteria, and restrict airflow to the skin—leading to discomfort or infection.

Generations Matter

- **F1 (50% Aussie, 50% Poodle):** High coat variability; some may shed.
- **F1b (75% Poodle):** More consistent curly, low-shedding coats.
- **F2/F2b/F3:** More controlled coats if carefully bred, but risks increase with inbreeding or poor selection.

Genetic testing for coat genes is strongly recommended for breeders who wish to produce allergy-friendly or low-maintenance coats.



Final Thoughts: Know Your Dog's Coat

The Aussiedoodle's coat is a beautiful, diverse canvas—but it comes with a price: **care, commitment, and clear expectations**. Whether allergy-prone or simply aiming for a healthy, low-shedding companion, it's crucial to:

- Understand your dog's coat type
- Groom regularly
- Avoid shaving unless medically required
- Be honest about hypoallergenic expectations

No coat is perfect, but with informed care, the Aussiedoodle can be a joyful and manageable companion.

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