



All The Presidents' Dogs: From Washington's to Biden's

Description

A compilation of canines that have called the White House home

By **Byron Toben**

Newly elected **U.S. President Joe Biden** has brought his two German Shepherds, **Champ** and **Major**, into the White House.

Trump had none.

This inspired me to discover that 24 of the now 46 Presidents – a slim majority – had dogs during their office.

Which ones were they and what type of canines? Inspired by Woodward and Bernstein's ***All The President's Men***, after the Watergate scandal, I hereby list ***All The Presidents' Dogs***, organized by the number of panting friends each kept.

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Twelve dogs

The first President, **George Washington**, had the most with twelve dogs, all being hounds, which he bred. (Today's breed is called American Foxhounds.)

Their names were Drunkard, Mopsey, Taster, Cloe, Topsy, Tipler, Forester, Captain, Lady Rover, Vulcan, Sweetlips and Searcher.



George Washington with one of his hounds – Image: courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association

Eleven dogs

Calvin Coolidge was the runner up with eleven dogs of varied breeds: three collies (Rob Roy, Ruby Rough and Bessie), two Chow Chows (Tiny Tim and Blackberry), two Terriers (Peter Pan and Paul Pry), and one each, a sheepdog (Calamity Jane), a bulldog (Boston Beans), a bird dog (Palo Alto) and an unknown breed (King Kole).

‘... [John F. Kennedy] also acquired mixed-breed Pushkina, a gift to daughter Caroline from Nikita Khrushchev.’

Nine dogs

Two Presidents kept nine dogs.

Herbert Hoover owned two Fox Terriers (Big Ben and Sonnie), two of unknown breed (King Tut and Pat) and one each, a collie (Glen), an Eskimo dog (Yukon), an Irish Wolfhound (Patrick), a Setter (Eaglehurst Gillette) and an Elkhound (Weeje).

John F. Kennedy held an Irish wolfhound (Wolf), a German Shepherd (Clipper), an English Cocker Spaniel (Shannon) and a Welsh terrier (Charlie). He also acquired mixed-breed Pushkina, a gift to daughter Caroline from Nikita Khrushchev. Charlie and Pushkina mated and produced four pups (Butterfly, WhiteTips, Blackie and Streaker).

Six dogs

Lyndon B. Johnson liked Beagles, of which he had four (Beagle, Little Beagle, Him and Her). He also had a

collie (Blanco) and a mutt (Yuki).

‘Richard Nixon maintained four dogs, the most famous of which was his Cocker Spaniel Checkers, immortalized in a speech.’

Five dogs

Theodore Roosevelt liked variety with a Bull Terrier (Pete), a Chesapeake Retriever (Sailor Boy), a Pekingese (Manchu), a Terrier (Jack) and a mutt (Skip).

Four dogs

Richard Nixon maintained four dogs, the most famous of which was his Cocker Spaniel Checkers, immortalized in a speech. The others were a poodle (Vicky), a Terrier (Pasha) and an Irish setter (King Timahoe).



Richard Nixon with his Cocker Spaniel Checkers – Image: courtesy of the Richard Nixon Foundation

Three dogs

Franklin D. Roosevelt's Scottish Terrier Fala is perhaps the most famous of presidential dogs but he had two others – a tiny Pekingese (Manchu) and a large Mastiff (Blaze).

Rutherford Hayes liked big dogs – two German Shepherds (Hector and Nellie) and an English Mastiff (Duke).

George W. Bush favoured small dogs – two Scottish Terriers (Barney and Miss Beazley) and an English Springer Spaniel (Spot).

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Two dogs

George H. W. Bush kept an English Springer Spaniel (Millie) and her puppy (Ranger).

John Adams' two were both of an unknown breed (Juno and Satan).

Warren Harding's two were an Airedale (Laddie Boy) and an English Bulldog (Old Boy).

Harry Truman chose an Irish Setter (Mike) and a Cocker Spaniel (Feller).

Ronald Reagan's two were a Bouvier Flanders (Lucky) and a King Charles Spaniel (Rex).

Barack Obama's two were both Portuguese Water Dogs (Bo and Sunny).



John F Kennedy and family with assorted dogs – Image: courtesy of the John F Kennedy Presidential library

One dog

John Tyler had a Greyhound (Le Beau).

James Buchanan had a Newfoundland Retriever (Lara).



James Garfield took an unknown breed (Veto).

Dwight D. Eisenhower kept a Weimaraner (Heidi).

Gerald Ford held a Golden Retriever (Liberty).

Jimmy Carter chose a mutt (Grits).

Bill Clinton favoured a Labrador Retriever (Buddy).

All the above are thus First Dogs. Memorize them and win trivia contests.

Pooch contest

Better yet, send us **your favourite breed from the above list** and **your favourite named prez dog** of any breed **by February 15**, together with a brief comment as to your choices.

Best replies get 15 minutes of fame by being named in WestmountMag. (Did Andy Warhol have a dog or ever paint one?)

Feature image: Jill Biden with German Shepherds Champ and Major, White House Instagram

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Byron Toben, a past president of The Montreal Press Club, has been WestmountMag.ca's theatre reviewer since July 2015. Previously, he wrote for since terminated web sites Rover Arts and Charlebois Post, print weekly The Downtowner and print monthly The Senior Times. He also is an expert consultant on U.S. work permits for Canadians.

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