

FAMOUS TV PETS



Pets are people too, ya know! At least, they seem so, especially on those ol' TV shows we all know and love. Some talk and some even walk on two legs, but surely all are smarter than the average bear... or human! Here are 10 famous TV pets you may remember and love.



Lassie - When I think of *Lassie*, I see a collie running through the green grass on a blue-sky day, the fur of her gorgeous coat blowing in the wind as Jeff, later Timmy, called "Laaaaassssssieeeee!" What a dog! She was smart enough to know danger, went to the rescue and then saved the day. She was the dog we all wanted as kids. Sorry to pop your bubble, but the real TV Lassie was a boy! Actually, multiple male collies played the part.



Rin Tin Tin - "Yayyyyy Rinny!" An enthusiastic "Woof woof!" response barks out from the world's most famous German shepherd. It turns out, the original Rin Tin Tin was a pup found by an American, Corporal Lee Duncan, in France during World War I (1918). After the war, Duncan took the pup home with him and the dog went on to become a famous movie actor. Then, in the 1950's, TV gave us *The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin*, and guess what? The hero dog and star of the show was Rin Tin Tin's direct descendent. Did you know Rin Tin Tin was the only dog in Los Angeles to be listed in the telephone directory?
Murray the Dog



If you were a *Mad About You* fan, you'll remember Murray the Dog, the invisible-mouse chaser. Paul finds the border collie mix in Central Park as a pup and realizes Murray is the perfect chick magnet for him and his buddy, Ira. After all, isn't that what dogs are *for*? In fact, that's how Paul meets Jamie. Murray is a lazy but lovable, affectionate and loyal dog who's "out to lunch" most of the time. Being a little slow upstairs, however, doesn't hold back the canine instincts that lead Murray to an affair with Sophie, the cairn terrier show dog across the hall, making him the proud father of five puppies. To Murray's credit, it turns out there really *is* a mouse, and Jamie finds it later in the series.

Eddie

Eddie, played by Moose the Dog, moves in with Frasier's dad and steals the show (Moose received more fan mail than any of the humans on the *Frasier* sitcom). Eddie is a smart dog, with an IQ that sometimes seems to surpass that of the show's other characters. His sharp and witty personality taunts Frasier, especially when he points his snout in Frasier's direction and stares him down. Eddie seems to love putting Frasier into uncomfortable situations, which may be why Frasier makes no bones about his lack of love for the dog. This isn't the case with the audience, as demonstrated by the dog's fan mail and the surge in popularity of Jack Russell terriers during the show's run. Moose retired after 10 years and was replaced by his son, Enzo.



Mr. Ed



Who wouldn't love a talking horse? Well, maybe that depends on what he's saying and doing with his communication skills. In Ed's case, he's a troublemaker, and the focus of his mischief is his owner, Wilbur -- the only person Ed will talk to face to face. Wilbur spends so much time hanging out in the barn that his wife thinks he loves his horse more than he loves her...and can you blame her? Ed is constantly plotting ways to get Wilbur into another mess. This chatty horse also talks on the phone, often using this as a method for carrying out his schemes against Wilbur. Maybe Mr. Ed was silly, but you still couldn't help but love him.



Petey

Petey was the lovable pit bull in the *Our Gang* show (and later *Little Rascals*). The original Petey, "Pal the Wonder Dog," was born with a black ring that went almost completely around his eye. This unique quality made him an adorable and captivating addition to the original 1920-30s kids' show. The studio hired an unknown makeup artist, Max Factor, to use the tip of a paintbrush and black hair dye to complete the circle around Petey's eye. Hmmm...Max Factor. That name sounds familiar.



Dino - Humans having animals as pets predates history. How do we know this? Well, from *The Flintstones*, of course! Dino was the happy, frolicking Stone-Age household pet in Fred, Wilma and Bam Bam's cave. Dino acted like a dog, barked like a dog, caught sticks like a dog and yapped and licked faces like a dog, but...Dino was a dinosaur. More specifically, a snorkasaurus. Just like a dog, Dino ran to the door to jump on and greet his master, Fred, on his return home from work. The show began in black and white, but when it went to color, Dino was blue in the opening and closing credits, purple during the show -- but sometimes pink or red. Go figure!

Astro - Dogs have been, and always will be, man's best friend. That takes us right into the future with *The Jetsons*.



Young Elroy befriends a stray dog and takes him home as a family pet. (Some things never change.) Astro wins George's appreciation over a robotic dog when he accidentally catches a burglar in the house. Not only is Astro of above-average intelligence (even by today's human standards), but he also has exceptional language skills. If you remember Astro flying, don't consider it a prediction for the dogs of the future. Astro had swallowed a toy rocket developed by Elroy, the 6-year-old boy genius.



Tweety and Sylvester - Any psychologist would have a field day with little ol' Granny's two beloved pets! Tweety is really a wolf in sheep's clothing, so to speak. On the surface, the poor little bird appears to be the victim when, in reality, the passive-aggressive avian is the one to watch out for. Sure, he *looks* all sweet and innocent, but is devious and malicious as he plots and plans against the less-than-genius Sylvester the Cat. Sylvester, starved for Granny's affection (and maybe a little taste of bird, too), bumbles along in his attempts at nabbing the annoying bird, but always ends up the battered "poor pudgy tat" loser. Tweety's cuteness vies for our attention, but poor beaten-up Sylvester catches our hearts in the end.



Brian Griffin - Probably, the last thing *Family Guy's* pet beagle -- the sarcastic, intellectual Brian -- would consider himself is a *dog*. After all, Brian walks like a human, sits and reads the newspaper, smokes cigars, dates human women, drinks martinis and, of course, is a know-it-all. He's not shy about hitting on Lois, the Griffin mom, either. He also tries to further corrupt far-from-innocent baby Stewie whenever he can. On *Family Guy*, the family treats Brian as a human member of the family who just happens to chase his tail and run after a ball occasionally. Still, from Brian's risqué language and antics, you know he is not the dog you'd take home to Mother.



Scooby-Doo - Shaggy's sidekick from the animated TV series of the same name, Scooby Doo, is a Great Dane who is constantly hungry and fearful of everything. Often forced to chase costumed villains by his friends, Scooby usually winds up accidentally solving the crimes in these animated mysteries. While he prefers to walk on all fours, he does have the ability to walk on two feet. What started as a lovable TV series in 1969, is still produced today and has been turned into film as well. Scooby will forever be a childhood favorite.

Image credit: Hanna-Barbera Productions



Snoopy - Snoopy started as an adorable and silly character in the comic strip *Peanuts* by Charles M. Schulz, which was illustrated and televised from 1950-2000. As Charlie Brown's pet dog, for the first two years Snoopy was a silent pup, but as the show progressed he began vocalizing his thoughts through thought bubbles. Snoopy preferred to live outside and while the interior of his dog house was quite extravagant, he liked to lie on top of it instead.



Buck – Married With Children

While I'm sure many more of you watched MWC for the Bundy family's semi-slutty daughter Kelly, played by Christina Applegate, Buck was a canine comic tour de force in his own right. Married with Children, a domestic comedy about a dysfunctional marriage and family, featured a shaggy Briard Sheep dog whose real name was Mike.

In the opening credits of each episode, the family, including Buck, lined up with open palms waiting for a cash infusion from patriarch Al Bundy, the former high school football star turned shoe salesman. In several episodes, we hear the Bundy's wisecracking dog's insulting thoughts about his family. The series ran for eleven years on Fox, with Buck retiring after nine years of service. The series killed him off, and Buck was reincarnated in the form of a Cocker Spaniel named Lucky who ends up back in the Bundy household. His last episode ended with the following on-screen message: "Dedicated to Buck the Dog who with this episode begins a well earned retirement and hopefully a nice gig as stud. We'll miss you, Buddy. Lift a leg. – The Producers."

