

Dogs of the Affenpinscher type have been known since about 1600, but were somewhat larger, about 12 to 13 inches, and in colors of gray, black, fawn, lack and tan, gray and tan, and even red. White feet and chest were also a common thing.

These dogs were known as Ratters or Ratting Terriers and were just the farm or store dog, running at large and sleeping in the stables, Their purpose was to kill rats.

From all history reports, a man from Lubeck, Germany was the first to breed them in earnest. Soon they were bred to a smaller size and used in the home as mousers. Mice were the great fear of the women of the house due to their long skirts. Most of the Ratting Terriers were salt and pepper, reddish black (red gray with the black hair mixed) or solid black. Dogs of the same description bred in other parts of Germany were of salt and pepper in color and more of the Schnauzer Ratter type of dog. Early breeders of the two did much crossing of this breed with other breeds to perfect what they were looking for in a house dog. Some of these other breeds included Pug (giving the start of the Brussels Griffon), the smooth haired German Pinscher, as well as a German breed of Silky Pinscher (giving some of the soft silver coat to some of our dogs of today).

These crosses can be the cause of some of the reds and black and tans we have today. One litter whelped in 1928, four in the litter, had three solid black and one solid white with black eyes and eye rims, black nails and pads, nose and gums. The sire and dam had three previous matings, producing all black.

Up to 1870 there was a small Schnauzer type of dog in South Russia approximately 14 inches high, dark steel gray, used by hunters to tree squirrels and morten. These dogs were thought to have died out since the Tzars did so much hunting and the game became extinct. However, recently word has it there are still a very few of the breed yet in Russia. It is believed the dogs first bred in Lubeck, Germany were of this origin and crossed with another breed. Usually the reds or black and tans had the thicker, harder coat than the gray ones.

The majority of Miniature Schnauzer historians still state the Mini came mostly from the Affen-Schnauzer crossing as well as other breeds in minority. This may well be true, as some of the early litters registered with the Z.Z. of all registered as one-half Affenpinschers and one-half as Miniature Schnauzers. In an English book on Brussels Griffons, the author states "there has always existed a breed of small, rough coated dogs, as early as the 15th century or before, and they were used for ratters and believed to be the forerunners of the present day Affenpinscher".

Around the 17th or 18th century there was a popular breed in Germany called Schoosbundrassen (which is translated as pet dog), they being more of the type of the present Affen. The cross of the small standard Schnauzer and the larger Affen is discounted by many of the very old German breeders. From Mrs. Woods, an English and International judge, come excerpts from old German records and private letters describing the little black dogs, their characteristics, actions, coat texture and such, the same as our present day Affen. These letters are dated in 1720. It appears there were two sizes with slight differences and actions. The larger becoming the Miniature Schnauzer and the smaller becoming the Affenpinscher.

Around 1750 Herr Hans-Jochen Kossman was breeding a small dog, a cross between the Mini Schnauzer and the German Pinscher. Other dog lovers were also breeding crosses using some of the same type of dogs still holding to a basic breed, but adding small differences from the other breeds used. When the Pug was used the nose was greatly shortened and soon became known as the Brussels Griffon. These breeders soon got together and concentrated on breeding, preserving the original basic prototype in a smaller dog of more style and type. These were the first forerunners of the Affenpinscher as we know it

today, However, the breed has changed very little in the last centuries and many of the old masters of art will show small, black bearded dogs looking very much like our present day Affenpinscher.

The color in Europe and England is always black, though a light frosting of grey is permissible. Canada, Mexico and Bermuda use the American Kennel Club standard, which allows for several colors: black, silver, black and tan, red, and belge (a mixture of red, black and white hairs).