

The Most Popular Breeds for a Home Without Pet Hair

Love cats and dogs but can't stand the constant cleaning up of pet hair? Or have a family member who may be allergic to pet fur? These five unique breeds won't bog you down with endless 'de-hairing' of your furniture, rugs, and drapes.

Reviewed by [Dr. Becker](#)

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Hairless dogs appeared on the scene as early as the 13th century; bald cats and dogs initially came about due to a genetic defect
- Two main reasons people began breeding hairless pets are that they don't shed and owners may be allergic
- The most common fur-free cat varieties are the Peterbald and Sphinx, with hairless dogs including the Xoloitzcuintli, Peruvian Inca Orchid and the Chinese Crested
- Peterbalds are a mix between the Sphynx and an Oriental Shorthair, with an elegant appearance and pointed, outsized ears half the width of their wedge-shaped heads
- The Sphynx's wizened face evokes that of Yoda, which is somewhat fitting, because this cat is intelligent and inquisitive

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint. It was originally published September 1, 2016.

When you see a completely hairless cat or dog, your first thought may be that he's undergone a barber's razor for whatever reason. But while it's unusual to see a dog or cat sans fur of any kind, or very little, there are breeds of both who were born to be bald.

The question is: how did these animals end up with no hair? Dr. Patrick Hensel, associate professor of veterinary dermatology at the University of Georgia, says it started with a genetic defect then turned into a "thing" to breed hairless dogs and cats.

Most people seek out a furless cat or dog breed because they want to keep their home free of pet hair. Another reason is because they may be allergic to fur, although Hensel says it may not be hair that causes allergic reactions but rather the skin scales from dog or cats.

One thing that's certain is that pets with no protective fur are prone to sunburn and even skin cancer, so use a pet-safe natural sunscreen if they go outside for long periods when it's sunny.

Fur also serves to regulate the animals' skin temperature; without it, dryness occurs because moisture evaporates quicker. Topical creams such as coconut oil may come in handy for this.

Hairless animals are also more prone to skin infections, particularly cats, who may experience an overgrowth of yeast, which may show up anywhere on their skin but most often appears in their nail beds. Five of the most popular hairless dogs and cats include:

1. **Chinese crested**



With its origin in 13th-century China, there are both hairless and furry varieties (the latter known as Powderpuff). These pups are smooth all over except for long tufts of silky hair on their "pigtail" ears, the tops of their heads, tails and lower part of their legs and paws.

Skin color for the Chinese Crested may be all over light or dark grey, either black or brown with white spots, or a combination of the above. The tufts of fur are typically white, silver or black.

Loyal and kid-friendly, these dogs are very nimble and have impressive jumping skills, although their first inclination is to sit in quiet companionship with their favorite humans.

2. **Peterbald**



These kitties are a mix between the Sphynx and an Oriental Shorthair, with an elegant appearance and pointed, outsized ears half the width of their wedge-shaped heads. The gene responsible for his baldness is dominant, while the Sphynx's is recessive.

Peterbald varieties are named to denote their "peach fuzz" fur or lack thereof. The ultrabald is just that, the chamois and flock have soft skin with a dense coat just in certain areas, and the velour appears and feels very much like his textile moniker. The brush is unique in that their wiry coats vary in length and density.¹

3. **Peruvian Inca Orchid (PIO)**



The PIO originated in the Andes area where the Incan name Quechua meant "dog without vestments" (aka naked). It is said to have been given the name by Spanish conquistadors who found them living in Incan homes among orchids.

A cousin to the Chinese Crested, these pups are hairless other than a small patch on the top of their head and sometimes their feet. Coloring can range between black, brown or gray, mixed with pink, tan or white. Generally reserved and cautious, they're best suited to an indoor environment.

4. **Sphynx**



Probably the most commonly known of all hairless varieties, the Sphynx's wizened face evokes that of Yoda, which is somewhat fitting, because this cat is intelligent and inquisitive. His entire body is made up of fine, soft-as-satin folds, with very tall, pointed and large ears.

Sphynx cats are often mixed with other breeds for unique characteristics, such as the Elf, combined with an American Curl; the Ukrainian Levkoy, thought to be a Sphynx-Scottish Fold combo, and the short-legged Bambino, bred with a Munchkin.² Tortoiseshell, solid, tabby or spotted, keep in mind that the Sphynx breed requires special care, requiring a tissue for his eyes and a wipe-down with oil every day to prevent clogged pores.

5. **Xoloitzcuintli**



Exotic is a good word for this dog, whose name looks impossible to pronounce until you see it broken down: sho-lo-eats-queent-lee, or Xolo (sho-lo) for short. Pre-Columbian art depicts the image of this regal-looking dog, so it's not thought to be an early breed, per se.

At birth, their silky skin appears loose enough to grow into. Xolos sometimes have a patch of fur on top of their head, not unlike a short mohawk. There's a closely related Xolo variety with hair, as well as toy and miniature sizes, but the large, pointed ears and long, narrow face are the same.

Naming Your Hairless Dog or Cat

One funny aspect of hairless cats and dogs are the names they're sometimes given. From PetHelpful's Punderful Names for Hairless Pets, some of the best, in my opinion, include Rogaine, Picard, Osbald, Razor, Fabio, Wax, Samson, Balderdash, Godiva and Lucille Bald.

Sources and References

[Vetstreet 2001-2016, August 9, 2012](#)

¹ [Cat Breed Info 2009-2013](#)

² [Featured Creature December 1, 2011](#)
