

# About Beagles



Beagles are hounds and like all hounds they have extremely acute senses of smell. So acute, they are able to detect where an animal not only is, but also where it had once been and even which direction it went. Add to this detection ability a bred-in instinct to chase and pursue and you have a beagle.

When a trained beagle encounters the scent of a rabbit it immediately gets excited. Its tail will begin wagging quickly from side to side as it sucks in and processes the invisible scent particles. The dog's excitement will increase until simply wagging the tail won't be enough and it will start to bark. It may take a few minutes for the dog to determine the direction the rabbit went and until it does, it will continue going in small circles sniffing the ground. Once the trail is discovered, the "chase" begins and the beagle will "tongue" (bark) as it travels through the area all the while staying on the rabbit's track. Of course, the rabbit can hear the dog behind it so it will stay just far enough ahead while it goes from place to place seeking safety, all the while making a steady trail of scent for the dog to follow. The dog's tonguing also allows the hunters to keep tabs on the direction the rabbit is moving. What motivates a beagle to trail rabbits is unclear, but their reasoning for wanting to chase isn't important since the fact is they absolutely love to chase rabbits. It's in their DNA. If I even so much as park my pickup truck near the kennels and drop the tailgate, they become wildly excited with the anticipation of going out to chase rabbits.

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