

# Potbelly Pig FAQs

Q. *Where did Vietnamese potbelly pigs come from?*

A. Keith Connell, a Canadian zoo director, imported sixteen unrelated potbelly pigs into Canada in 1985 and in 1989 a second line of potbellies were transported to Texas from Europe by Keith Leavitt. The vast majority of all registered pot-bellied pigs in the USA can be traced back to these two lines, known as the Connell and Lea lines. These pigs were imported for zoological gardens but when people realized how smart and devoted they are they were soon in demand. Breeders sought up to \$20,000 for a pig at the height of their popularity in the 1980s.

Q. *What size is a potbelly pig and what do they look like?*

A. Vietnamese potbelly pigs are domesticated pigs which originated in Vietnam. They are much smaller than their relatives, the farm pigs. Farm pigs can grow to be 900 pounds but potbelly pigs are much smaller, ranging from 60 to 150 lbs. when fed the proper diet. They have dense, compact bodies with a swayed back and potbelly. Their ears are small and stand upright, as opposed to farm pigs' ears, which are large and may flop over the face, and they have a straight tail. Potbelly pigs reach their full size in about 3 years.

Q. *Aren't pigs dirty?*

A. No, pigs are naturally clean. Outdoors they like to wallow in the mud because it helps deter insects and keeps them cool. Many potbelly pig owners supply their piggies with child-size plastic swimming pools.



Q. *Can you really keep a pig in the house??*

A. Yes. Potbelly pigs are very clean and will quickly learn to use a litterbox, or can be housebroken the same as dogs. Pigs are however, not dogs and potbelly pig owners must be willing to educate themselves to meet the needs of an animal with the intellect of a toddler.

Q. *Are pigs smart?*

A. Pigs are the fourth smartest animal group on the planet, following only humans, apes/chimps, whales and dolphins. Pigs can be trained to do many tricks and make fabulous companions with their quirky personalities and sense of humor. Pigs can even learn to play video games!

Q. *What problems arise with pigs in the house?*

A. Because pigs are very intelligent they need to occupy their minds. If left alone all day without suitable ways to keep their minds busy they will use their intelligent minds for devious purposes such as opening and raiding the refrigerator, inspecting the silverware drawer, etc. A house should be pig-proofed the same way it would be for a toddler. Some experts recommend having two pigs to occupy each other but some experts also say that two pigs will work together on a piggy mission!

Q. *Do they shed?*

A. Potbelly pigs do not shed like cats or dogs do, however they do lose their bristles at least once a year.

Q. *Why do pigs root?*

A. Pigs have an instinctual desire to root to garner minerals that their body can not manufacture. If given a pile of blankets they will joyfully root a big nest in them and slumber the night away.

Q. *What do they eat?*

A. Pot belly pigs require a low-protein, low-salt diet to remain in peak condition. There are commercial diets made especially for pet pigs. They also love treats such as animal crackers, fruits and vegetables in moderation. In the wild, natural foods would be roots, plants, insects and a variety of other natural foods.

Q. *Why do people say "Sweat like a pig"?*

A. I don't know! Pigs have only one small row of sweat glands. If you look closely at the top of their snout in hot weather you can see a row of tiny droplets. That's it!

Q. *Should I spay/neuter my pig?*

A. Yes. Your pig will be much happier, will be a better pet and will have a lower risk of cancer, infections and other ailments.

Q. *Is there any such thing as "mini", "micro" or "teacup" pigs?*

A. NO! If you are considering such a purchase ask to see your pig's GRANDparents to get a true idea of what size your pig will be when it grows up. Refer to [www.teacuppig.info](http://www.teacuppig.info) for the truth.