

Is Your Weimaraner's Name Trendy?

Being a self-confessed sucker for click bait, I didn't even try to resist an article that promised a listing of most popular baby names by decade. (Who wouldn't check to see if their name made the list?) That listing of human names, got me wondering about names that people give their dogs. I'm not talking about registered names but rather the call names that people use day in and day out for thousands of times in the life of their dog.

It seems that just as there are trends in people names, so too dog names have changed over the years. If what I'm reading on the Internet is correct, the names we would likely use for our dogs go in and out of fashion.

Flash back to the 19th century and you'd be surprised by the most popular names. Would you believe Rover, Fido and Spot were among the top choices? There were also some frequently used names that have slipped off the naming radar like Jip, Nellie, Juno and Ponto. Naming trends have certainly morphed over the years.

What about current trends? Where better to find data on names than an organization that registers dogs like the American Kennel Club? If you do a search on the most popular names in 2023 there's a listing of the most used names. For the boys the top five names were: Max, Charlie, Cooper, Teddie, and Milo; for the ladies they were: Luna, Bella, Daisy, Maggie, and Willow. Of course, this listing excludes all the kennel or breeder based registered names that we use for our show dogs and other canine competitors. What is also missing are the longer or more unique names that people dream up for their new puppy. Unfortunately, the listing of popular names was not done by breed so the question remains open about trends in Weimaraner names.

Not to be deterred in the quest for trends in naming Weimaraners, I took the totally unscientific method of surfing the Web and pouring over old Weimaraner books and magazines. If you read till your eyes are burning and you could get a tan from the glow of your computer screen, there you can spot some naming trends for Weimaraners.

Since Weimaraners did not exist in the US until the first half of the 20th century, our naming trends started with the German names of the first imports. The first Weimaraners to come to this country came with their German call names firmly affixed. The first two Weimaraners to come to these shores had the names of Cosack and Lotte. These first two dogs were imported in 1929. It was not until nine years later in 1938 that additional dogs were permitted out of their native Germany. Their names were Mars, Dorle, Adda, Tasso and Aura. In my experience, I've never run into Weimaraners that carried these exact names into more modern times.

However, although these historically based German names did not seem to catch on, the use of other German names were widely used as the north American Weimaraner population increased. Names like Max, Grethen, Jaeger, Madchen and Blitz show up repeatedly. In fact, in the 1950's President Eisenhower had a Weimaraner named Heidi.

Another naming trend was to use words that tried to capture the unique color of our breed like Smoke, Misty, Blue and Silver, I even knew one dog that was named Taupe although she was the only one of that name that I've ever encountered.

Naming Weimaraners also showed a trend toward terms used to denote nobility. Who hasn't encountered a Duke, Princess, Baron or Dutchess? In registered Weimaraner names, the German surname term of "von" or "von der" appeared. *Von* was originally used to delineate names with noble lineage but later was used by common folk to simply mean *of* or *from*. So if you lived in St. Louis and you had a Weimaraner named Max you might register him as Maximilian von der St. Louis. (Sounds pretty spiffy doesn't it?)

Whether you name your dog after a trendy pop culture figure or go back to a more traditional name, the great fun is coming up with a name that captures the personality and spirit of your dog. Is your dog's name trendy? It doesn't really matter as long as you like the name because you will be saying it thousands and thousands of times.

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