

A close-up photograph featuring a UConn Husky mascot on the left and a real husky dog on the right. The mascot is a large, white and grey plush figure with a blue eye, wearing a dark blue jacket with a white 'A' logo and red and white stripes. The real husky is a smaller, grey and white dog with a black collar, looking towards the right. The background is a blurred blue wall with white patterns.

# UConn Huskies

 **beanstack originals**



# UConn Huskies

Meet the furry, four-legged friend on the University of Connecticut's bench.



The University of Connecticut, or UConn, features a doggone delightful mascot: Jonathan the Husky. Actually, there are two Jonathans: The four-legged one is a real black-and-white husky, and the other is a human in a furry costume.

## *A Long Line of Jonathans*

There have been many canine Jonathans over the years. The first Jonathan was appointed in 1935, after students at the school voted to have a husky as their symbol. As each dog gets older and retires, a puppy Jonathan takes his place. The current canine is called Jonathan the XIV, because he is the fourteenth dog to hold the job, and XIV is the Roman way to write 14. His favorite treat is vanilla ice cream.

Huskies are a polar breed, meaning they come from cold areas near the North Pole. They are descended from a mix of dogs and wolves, so they have thick fur and powerful legs. That makes them strong, excellent runners, able to pull heavy sleds in snowy weather. One Jonathan even traveled to Antarctica on a mission for the United States Navy.

### **FUN FACT**

**Jonathan the XIV is the first black-and-white husky mascot in the school's history. For 78 years, only all-white huskies were used.**





## UConn Huskies



Huskies can also be fearless. Once, at a football game, Jonathan chased Brown University’s mascot—which in those days was a live bear—right up a tree. The bear was so scared he refused to climb down, and had to be rescued by firefighters.

But Jonathan has another, more deep-rooted frenemy than Brown’s bear. He and Handsome Dan, the Yale University bulldog mascot, have a long history of chasing each other at games.

Jonathan the Husky is named after Jonathan Trumbull, the first governor of Connecticut and a close friend of George Washington.



A bronze statue of Jonathan the Husky looks out over the University of Connecticut campus.

### Hyping up the Huskies

Speaking of human Jonathans, the two-legged costumed mascot—while not as cute as his puppy partner—is also popular at basketball games. For years, costumed Jonathan thrilled the crowds with his “Husky Slide”: running at full speed across the

#### DID YOU KNOW?

**Several Jonathans have had one blue eye and one brown. Mismatched eye color is called “heterochromia.”**



## UConn Huskies



court, leaping high, and flying into a belly-flop slide on the wooden floor. But one day, a bad landing broke Jonathan's ribs. Ouch! The school banned the Husky Slide for being too dangerous. Still, Jonathan dances and cheers at every game.

The UConn women's basketball team is hard to beat. They have won 11 national championships, the most of any school in history. Once, they won 111 games in a row—a streak so long it lasted more than two years!

Many UConn players have gone on to play professionally in the WNBA and NBA, including superstars Sue Bird, Diana Taurasi, and Ray Allen. In the 2020 Olympics, four former Huskies played together on the USA women's basketball team and won gold.