



Official Breed Standard of the Kennel Union of South Africa



FINNISH SPITZ

UTILISATION

A hunting dog mainly for forest game birds, also predatory small game, water fowl and elk. Eager hunter; rather independent, yet works co-operatively to game, marking game by barking.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The origin of the Finnish Spitz is unknown. However, it is known that hundreds of years ago dogs of the same type as Finnish Spitz were already being used for all game hunting over the whole country. Originally the main goal was to develop a dog which barked well at game up in trees and was also beautiful. When acceptance to the breed register started in the 1890's, individuals similar in type and usage were found mainly in the eastern and northern parts of the country. The first standard was established in 1892. The first speciality show was held the same year and the first bird-hunting trial in 1897. Today the breed is very common in both Finland and Sweden. It has been developed from pure natural stock and is an essential part of the Finnish culture. The Finnish Spitz was named as the National Dog of Finland in 1979.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Smaller than medium-sized, almost square. In conformation lean, firm and carries itself well.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

The length of the body is the same as the height at the withers. The depth of the chest is slightly less than half of the height at the withers. The ratio between the muzzle and skull is approximately 3:4. The skull is a little broader than long; its breadth is the same as its depth.

BEHAVIOUR/TEMPERAMENT

Lively, vigorous, brave and determined. Possibly a little reserved towards strangers, but never vicious.

HEAD

CRANIAL REGION

Skull : Viewed from above egg-shaped broadening gradually towards the ears, broadest between the ears. Viewed from the front and in profile the skull is slightly convex. The upper axes of the skull and muzzle are almost parallel. The frontal furrow is very shallow. The superciliary ridges and the occiput are slightly visible.

Stop : Not very pronounced, the angle between the nasal bridge and the skull is clearly marked.

FACIAL REGION

Nose : rather small, jet black.

Muzzle : narrow, clean, viewed from above and in profile evenly tapering. The nasal bridge is straight. The lower jaw is clearly visible.

Lips : tight, rather thin and close fitting. Good pigmentation.

Jaws/Teeth : the jaws are strong. The teeth are well developed and symmetrical; normal dentition. Tight scissor bite.

Cheeks : the zygomatic arches are slightly emphasised.

Eyes : medium-sized, almond-shaped, slightly oblique and preferably dark. The expression is lively and alert.

Ears : set rather high, always erect. Rather small sized, pointed, very mobile and covered with fine hair.

NECK

Muscular; it appears to be rather short in males due to the thick ruff, of medium length in bitches. Throat without dewlap.

BODY

Withers : clearly defined, especially in males.

Back : rather short, straight and muscular.

Loin : short and muscular.

Croup : of medium length, well developed and slightly sloping.

Chest : deep, reaching almost the elbows, not very broad. The ribs are slightly arched; the forechest clearly visible, not very broad.

Lower Line : slightly tucked up.

TAIL

Curved vigorously forward from the set-on tightly along the back, down and slightly backwards pressed against the upper thigh, the tip of the tail reaches to the middle of the upper thigh. When straightened reaches approximately down to the hocks.

LIMBS

Forequarters

General Appearance : viewed from the front straight and parallel. The bone is of medium length. The

upper arm is a little shorter than the shoulder blade and the forearm.

Shoulders : firm, very mobile and relatively straight.

Upper arm : little shorter than the shoulder blade. Slightly sloping and strong.

Elbows : placed in front of a vertical line drawn from the highest point of the shoulder blade; pointing straight backwards.

Forearm : rather strong, vertical.

Metacarpus (Pastern) : of medium length, slightly sloping.

Forefeet : roundish, cat-feet. Toes tight and well arched. Pads elastic, always black, the sides covered with dense hair.

HINDQUARTERS

General Appearance : strong, viewed from behind straight and parallel, medium angulation. The bone is of medium length. The upper thigh is slightly longer than the second thigh.

Upper Thigh : of medium length, rather broad with well developed muscles.

Stifle : pointed forward, medium angulation.

Second Thigh : muscular.

Hock Joints : set moderately low, medium angulation.

Metatarsus (Hock) : rather short, strong and vertical.

Hindfeet : a little longer than the front feet, otherwise the same. The declaws should be removed.

GAIT/MOVEMENT

Light, covering the ground effortlessly. Changes easily from trot to gallop, which is the most natural style of movement. The legs move parallel. When rushing after game, he bursts explosively into a fast gallop.

SKIN

Tight overall without wrinkles.

COAT

Hair : rather long on the body, semi-erect, stiffer on the neck and back. On the head and the legs, except at the back of the hindquarters, short and close-lying. The stiff hair on the shoulders, especially in males, is noticeably longer and coarser. On the back of the thighs (trousers) and on the tail the hair is long and dense. The undercoat is short, soft, dense and light in colour.

Colour : the hair on the back is red or golden brown, preferably bright. A lighter shade inside the ears, on cheeks, throat, chest, belly, inside the legs, back of the thighs and on the tail. A white stripe on the chest and small white markings on the feet are permitted.

SIZE AND WEIGHT

Height at withers :	Ideal height for males	47cm
	Ideal height for females	42cm
	With a tolerance of +- 3cm	
Weight :	Males	12-13 kg.
	Bitches	7-10 kg.

FAULTS

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree

Coarse muzzle

Weak underjaw

Ears pointing forward in a sharp angle, leaning sideways or close together at the tips, curving backwards or ears that are longhaired inside

Slack or too tightly curved tail

Too flexible in pasterns

Long, soft, too short or close-lying coat

Clearly defined diversity of colours

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS

Flesh coloured nose

Overshot or undershot mouth

Eyes bright yellow or wall eye

Ears with drooping tips

Kinky tail

Wavy or curly coat

Colour shades differing clearly from the basic colour

Large white markings on the chest and/or a white sock

Clearly aggressive disposition towards people

NOTE

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

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