

AUSTRALIAN SILKY TERRIER

A Breed Standard is the guideline that describes the ideal characteristics, temperament, and appearance of a breed, and ensures that the breed is fit for function, with soundness essential. Breeders and Judges should, at all times, be mindful of features that could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare, or soundness of this breed.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2017

ORIGIN

Australia.

UTILISATION

Toy Terrier / companion dog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The two main ancestors of this breed were the Australian Terrier and the Yorkshire Terrier. During the period 1820-1830, a Broken-coated Terrier bitch of a blue sheen colour, which was bred in Tasmania, was taken to England and mated to a Dandy Dinmont Terrier. A Mr Macarthur Little, of London, purchased some puppies from this litter and experimented with further breeding to produce the soft silky coat. Later Mr Little migrated to Sydney, Australia, and continued his breeding programme using both Australian Terriers and Yorkshire Terriers. These dogs soon spread though out the Colonies of Australia and the Australian Silky Terrier was established as a breed. A standard for the breed was first drawn up in the early 1900s.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The dog is compact, moderately low-set, of medium length, with a refined structure but of sufficient substance to suggest the ability to hunt and kill domestic rodents. The parted, straight silky hair presents a well-groomed appearance.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

It should display Terrier characteristics, embodying keen alertness, activity, and soundness. A courageous and dignified Toy Terrier, that is second to none as a companion.

HEAD

Of moderate length, slightly shorter from the tip of the nose to between the eyes than from the same position to the occiput. The head must be strong and of Terrier character, being moderately broad between the ears.

Cranial Region:

Skull: Flat and without fullness between the eyes, with fine silky topknot, not falling over the eyes, (a long fall of hair on the foreface or cheeks is very objectionable).

Stop: Defined but moderate.

Facial Region:

Nose: Black.

Lips: Tight and clean.

Jaws and teeth: Strong jaws, teeth even and not cramped, the upper incisors fitting closely over the lower (scissor bite).

Eyes:

Shall be small, oval never round or prominent, dark as possible in colour, with a keen intelligent expression.

Ears:

Should be small, V-shaped with fine leather, set high on the skull, pricked, and entirely free from long hair.

NECK

Medium length, refined and slightly crested, fitting gracefully into the shoulders. Well covered with long silky hair.

BODY

Should be moderately long in proportion to the height of the dog.

Topline: Level topline at all times (both standing and moving).

Loin: Strong.

Chest: Of moderate depth and breadth. Ribs well sprung extending back to strong loins.

TAIL

If docked: set on high and carried erect but not over-gay. Should be free of feathering.

Undocked: the first three vertebrae to be carried erect or slightly curved but not curved over back. Must not be curled. The length to give an overall balanced appearance. In accordance with the description of the docked tail, the undocked tail also to be free of feathering.

[*refer note below]

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: The forelegs have refined, round bone and are straight and set well under the body with no weakness in the pasterns.

Shoulder: Fine and well laid back, fitting with well-angulated upper arms snugly to the ribs.

Elbow: Turned neither in nor out.

Forearm: The length is equal to that of the upper arm; follows a perfect vertical direction.

Metacarpus (pastern): Seen from the front they continue the vertical line of the forearm. Seen in profile, the pastern is slightly slanting.

Hindquarters:

Upper thigh: Must be well-developed.

Stifle (knee): Should be well-turned.

Hock joint: Well-bent. When viewed from behind the hocks should be well let down and parallel with each other.

FEET

Small, well-padded, cat-like with closely knit toes; the toenails must be black or very dark.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

The movement should be free and true without slackness at shoulders or elbows, there should be no turning in or out of the feet or pasterns. The hindquarters should have strong propelling power with ample flexibility at stifles and hocks. Viewed from behind, the movement should be neither too close nor too wide.

COAT

Must be flat, fine, and glossy and of a silky texture. The length of coat must not be so long as to impede the dog's action and should allow daylight to be seen under the dog. The front and rear feet to be free from long hair.

COLOUR

- All shades of blue and tan are acceptable, the richer these colours and more clearly defined the better.
- * Silver and white not acceptable.
- * Blue on the tail to be very dark.
- * Silver blue or fawn topknot desirable.
- * Distribution of blue and tan as follows : tan around the base of the ears, muzzle and on the sides of the cheeks; blue from the base of the skull to tip of tail, running down the forelegs to near the wrists and down the thighs to the hocks; tan line showing down the stifles and from the wrists and hocks to the toes and around the vent.
- * The blue body colour must be free from tan or bronzing.
- * Tan markings must be free from smuttiness.
- * Black colouring is permissible in puppies, blue colour must be established by 18 months of age.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 23cm – 26cm (approx. 9" – 10").

Females: can be slightly less.

Weight:

Weight in proportion to height.

N.B. Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum. Only functionally and clinically healthy dogs, with breed typical conformation should be used for breeding.

*Regardless of the provisions of the current KUSA-adopted standard, docked or formerly docked breeds may be shown at all FCI- and KUSA-licensed shows in South Africa, whether their tails are docked or natural. Under no circumstances are Judges permitted to discriminate against exhibits on the grounds of docked or natural tails, and equal consideration for awards must be given to either.

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 and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

Severe faults:

- Topline showing roach or dip.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.

©Copyright FCI – Reprinted with permission

The publisher of this edition is the Kennel Union of Southern Africa. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without permission in writing from the publisher.



FCI Standard No 236: AUSTRALIAN SILKY TERRIER

FCI Classification: Group 3: Terriers

Section 4. Toy Terriers.

Without Working Trial