

SWEDISH VALLHUND

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 01/02/2017

ORIGIN

Sweden.

UTILISATION

Herding heeler.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Swedish Vallhund is considered to be an authentic Swedish breed although uncertainty still exists as to the relationship with the type like the Welsh Corgi. Whether or not the Vikings brought Corgi-type dogs back from the British Isles to Sweden, or Västgötaspets-like dogs from Sweden to Britain will never be solved. But modern research believes that the Västgötaspets is of Swedish origin. Regardless of the breed's origin, credit for its recognition goes to Count Björn von Rosen and headmaster Zetterstén. In the early 1940s von Rosen was told that this old type of herding dog still existed and an investigation took place in the County of West Gotha. Particularly in the planes of Vara, specimens of homogeneous type were found – few in numbers, but enough for Zetterstén to start the breeding. Breed type was well-established without losing the working ability.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Small, low on legs, and sturdy. Appearance and expression denote a watchful, alert, and energetic dog.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

Ratio of height at withers to length of body 2 : 3. The height from lowest part of chest to ground never to be less than one-third of the height at withers.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

Watchful, energetic, fearless and alert.

HEAD

Clean-cut and fairly long. Skull and nose bridge parallel.

Cranial Region:

Viewed from above, as well as from the side, moderately broad and tapering evenly towards the nose.

Skull: Almost flat.

Stop: Well-defined.

Facial Region:

Nose: Black.

Muzzle: When viewed from the side, is rather blunt-cut and only slightly shorter than the skull.

Lips: Well-fitting and tightly closed.

Jaws and teeth: Lower jaw rather blunt-cut and strong, but not prominent. Perfect and regular scissor bite with complete, even, and well-developed teeth.

Eyes:

Medium size, oval in shape and dark brown.

Ears:

Medium size, pointed, pricked, and ear leather is hard from base to tip, smooth-haired, and mobile. Length of ear should slightly exceed the width at base.

NECK

Long and strongly muscled, with good reach.

BODY

Topline: Back level, well-muscled.

Loin: Short, broad, and strong.

Croup: Broad and slightly sloping.

Chest: Long with good depth. Ribs fairly well-sprung. When viewed from the front, the chest is oval, from side, elliptical. It reaches two-fifths of the length of the forelegs and, when viewed from the side, the lowest point of the chest is immediately behind the back of elbow. Sternum visible, but not excessively pronounced.

Underline and belly: Belly slightly tucked-up.

TAIL

Two types of tails occur: long, and all variations in length of naturally short tail. In both cases all variations of carriage are permitted as there is no norm for the carriage.

[*refer note below]

LIMBS

With strong bone.

Forequarters:

Shoulder: Long and set at an angle of 45° to the horizontal plane.

Upper arm: Slightly shorter than the shoulder blades, and set at a distinct angle. Upper arms lie close to ribs, but are still very mobile.

Forearm: When viewed from the front, slightly bent, just enough to give them free action against the lower part of the chest.

Metacarpus (pastern): Elastic.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Parallel, when viewed from behind.

Upper thigh: Broad and strongly muscled.

Stifle (knee): Well-angulated.

Lower thigh: Only slightly longer than the distance from hock to ground.

Hock joint: Well-angulated.

Metatarsus (rear pastern): Of moderate height.

FEET

Medium-sized, short, oval, pointing straight forward with strong pads, tightly knit and well-knuckled up.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Sound, with good reach and drive.

COAT

Topcoat, of moderate length, hard, tight and lying close to body, undercoat is soft and very dense. The coat is short on head, and foreparts of the legs may be longer on neck, throat, chest, and back parts of the hind legs.

COLOUR

- Grey, greyish brown, greyish yellow, reddish yellow or reddish brown.

* Lighter hair in the same nuance of colour as mentioned above can be seen on muzzle, throat, chest, belly, buttocks, feet, and hocks.

* Darker guard hairs visible on back, neck, and sides of the body.

* Lighter markings on shoulders, so-called 'harness markings', and light cheek markings are highly desirable.

* White is permitted to a small extent as a narrow blaze, neck spot, or slight necklace.

* White markings are permitted on chest, fore-and hind legs.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 33cm (approx. 13").

Females: 31cm (approx. 12").

A tolerance of 2 cm (under 1") above or 1 cm (approx. ½") below these heights is permitted.

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.

- Too low to ground.
- Stop not well-defined.
- Snipey muzzle.
- Lack of two P1 or one P2.
- Light eyes giving wrong expression.
- Ears set too low.
- Chest too deep or too shallow.
- Too wide in front.
- Steep shoulders.
- Too short in upper arms.
- Over angulated hindquarters.
- Lack of harness- or cheek-markings.

Severe faults:

- Short or rounded skull.
- Short muzzle.
- Lower jaw receding, narrow, or weak jaw.
- Pincer bite.
- Lack of molars (M3 not taken into account).
- Roach back.
- Soft coat or stand-off coat.
- Coat too short or too long.
- Lack of undercoat.
- White markings exceeding 30% of base colour.
- Height severely diverging from the ideal height.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy dogs.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Over- or undershot bite.
- Blue eyes, one or both.
- Hanging ears or semi-erect ears.
- Long, curly coat.
- Black, white, liver brown or blue coat colour.

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FCI Standard No 14: VÄSTGÖTASPETS (SWEDISH VALLHUND)

FCI Classification: Group 5 – Spitz and primitive types.

Section 1. Nordic Watchdogs and Herders.

Without Working Trial