



Official Breed Standard



Borzoi - Russian Hunting Sighthound (Hound Group)

A Breed Standard is the guideline which 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 which could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed.

UTILIZATION : Hunting sighthound, racing and coursing hound.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY : The Russkaya Psovaya Borzaya has been an integral part of the national culture and Russian history for 9 centuries. The French Chronicle of the XIth century shows that three Borzois accompanied the daughter of the Grand Duke of Kiev, Anna Iaroslavna when she arrived in France to become the wife of Henri I. Among the owners and breeders there were many famous people including Tsars and poets : Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Nicolas II, Pushkin, Turgenev. The creation of the famous kennel « Pershinskaya okhota » by the illustrious breeders the Grand Duke Nicolai Nicolaevitch and Dimitri Valtsev had great importance. From the end of the XIXth century, the Borzoi is seen in the biggest breeding kennels of Europe and America.

GENERAL APPEARANCE : Dog of aristocratic appearance, of large size, of lean and at the same time robust constitution, of a very slightly elongated construction. Females are generally longer than males. Strong bone structure but not massive. The bones are rather flat. Muscles lean, well developed, especially on the thighs, but not showing in relief. Harmony of form and movement is of prime importance.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS :

- In males the height at the withers is equal or barely superior to that from the summit of the croup to the ground.
- In females these two heights are equal.
- The height at the withers must be slightly inferior to the length of the body.
- The depth of the chest is approximately equal to half the height at the withers.
- The length of the muzzle, from the stop to the tip of the nose, is equal or slightly superior to that of the skull, from the occiput to the stop.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT : In its everyday life the Borzoi has a quiet and balanced character. At the sight of game it gets suddenly excited. It has a piercing sight, capable of seeing very far. Its reaction is impetuous.

HEAD : Viewed from above as well as from the side, lean, long, narrow, aristocratic. Seen in profile, the lines of the skull and muzzle form a long, slightly convex line, the line of the sagittal crest being straight or slightly oblique towards the well marked occipital protuberance. The head is so elegant and lean that the principal veins show through the skin.

CRANIAL REGION :

Skull : Narrow; seen from above : elongated into an oval shape; seen in profile, almost flat.

Stop : Only very slightly marked.

FACIAL REGION :

Nose : Large, mobile, considerably prominent in relation to the lower jaw.

Top of muzzle : Long, filled out in all its length, **slightly** arched near the nose.

Muzzle : The length of the muzzle from the stop to the tip of the nose is equal or slightly superior to that of the skull, from the occiput to the stop.

Lips : Fine, clean, well fitting. The eye-rims, the lips and the nose are black whatever the colour of the coat.

Jaws/Teeth : **Strong underjaw**. Teeth white, strong; scissor bite or pincer bite.

Eyes : Large, very slightly prominent, expressive, dark hazel or dark brown, almond-shaped, but not slit-eyed, set obliquely.

Ears : Small, **thin**, mobile, set on above the eye level and backwards, **pointing** almost towards the nape of the neck **when not alert**. The tips of the ears **are** situated near each other or directed downwards along the neck and close to it. When the dog is alert, the ears are carried higher and on the sides or forward; sometimes one or both ears are erect like horse ears.

NECK : Long, clean, flattened laterally, muscled, slightly arched, **never carried high**.

BODY :

Withers : Not marked.

Back : Broad, muscled, elastic, forming with the loin and croup a curve which is more pronounced in the males. The highest point of this curve is situated **ahead of the middle of the loin or** in the region of the 1st or 2nd lumbar vertebra.

Loin : Long, prominent, muscled, moderately broad.

Croup : Long, broad, slightly sloping. The width of the croup measured between the two hip bones (iliac crests) must not be less than 8 cm.

Chest : Of oval cross-section, not narrow, yet not wider than the croup, deep, well developed in length, spacious, reaching down almost to elbow level. The region of the shoulder blades being flatter, the chest gets gradually wider towards the false ribs, which are short; seen in profile, it forms a change in slope. The ribs are long, slightly prominent. The forechest is slightly prominent in relation to the scapular-humeral articulation.

Belly : Well tucked up, the underline rises **abruptly** towards the abdomen.

TAIL : In shape of sickle or sabre, low set, thin, long. Passed between the hindlegs, it must reach up to the hip bone (iliac crest), furnished with abundant feathering. When the dog is standing **naturally**, the tail hangs downwards. In action, it is raised, but not above the level of the back.

LIMBS

FOREQUARTERS :

General appearance : Forelegs clean, muscled, seen from the front perfectly straight and parallel. The height of the forelegs from the elbow to the ground is equal or a little superior to half the height at the withers.

Shoulders : Shoulder blades are long and oblique.

Upper arm : Moderately oblique; its length is barely superior to the length of the shoulder blade. Angle of the scapular-humeral articulation well pronounced.

Elbows : In parallel planes to the median plane of the body.

Forearm : Clean, long, of oval cross-section; seen from the front, narrow, seen in profile, broad.

Metacarpus (pastern) : Slightly oblique in relation to the ground.

HINDQUARTERS :

General appearance : Seen from behind : straight, parallel, set slightly wider than the forequarters.

When the dog is standing naturally, the vertical line dropping from the ischiatic tuberosity (point of buttocks) must pass in front of the centre of the hock joint and of the metatarsals.

Upper thigh : Well muscled, long, placed obliquely.

Lower thigh : Long, muscled, placed obliquely. The femoro-tibial and the tibio-tarsal articulations well developed, broad, clean; the angles must be well marked.

Metatarsus (rear pastern) : Not long, placed almost vertically.

All the articulations are well angulated.

FEET : Lean, narrow, of elongated oval shape (called « harefeet »); toes arched, tight; nails long, strong, touching the ground.

GAIT / MOVEMENT : When not hunting, the typical gait of the Borzoi is the extended trot, effortless, very supple and lifting; when hunting the charging gallop is extremely fast, with leaps of great length.

SKIN : Supple, elastic.

COAT

HAIR : Silky, soft and supple, wavy or forming short curls, **but never small tight curls**. On the head, the ears and the limbs, the hair is satiny (silky but heavier), short, close lying. On the body, the hair is quite long, wavy; on the regions of the shoulder blades and the croup, the hair forms finer curls; on the ribs and thighs, the hair is shorter; the hair which forms the fringes, the « breeches » and the feathering of the tail is longer. **The coat on the neck is dense and abundant.**

COLOUR : All colour combinations, **but never** with blue, brown (chocolate) and any derivatives of these colours.

All the colours may be solid or pied. The fringes, « breeches », featherings of the tail are considerably lighter than the ground colour.

For the overlaid colours a black mask is typical.

SIZE:

Desirable height at the withers : dogs : 75 - 85 cm,

bitches : 68 - 78 cm.

In males, the height at the withers is equal or barely superior to that from the summit of the croup to the ground. In females, these heights are equal. Subjects exceeding the maximum height are acceptable provided the typical morphology is preserved. **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, **especially:**

Teeth :

- Small, abnormally worn teeth. Absence of one PM2.
- PM1s and M3s are not taken into account.

Colour :

- Flecks of the same shade as the ground colour.

SEVERE FAULTS :

General appearance :

- **Stocky appearance ; short trunk.**
- Heavy, round bone.

Head :

- Soft tissues.
- Blunt muzzle.
- **Very pronounced stop.**
- **Very pronounced zygomatic arches.**
- **Occiput not pronounced.**

Teeth :

- Lack of one PM3, one PM4 (lower jaw), one M1 (upper jaw), one M2.

Eyes :

- Deep set; yellow **or light; slit eyes (too narrow palpebral aperture); showing haw.**

Ears :

- Thick, coarse, with rounded tips.

Neck :

- **Presence of dewlap.**

Back :

- Sagging; straight back in males.

Croup :

- Goose rump.

Belly :

- Pendulous, **insufficiently tucked up.**

Tail :

- Coarse; in action, falling downwards.

Forequarters :

- **Scapular-humeral angle too open (straight shoulder)**
- **In or out at elbows.**
- **Forearm : Of round cross-section. Any deviation of the forearm.**
- **Knuckling over.**
- **Weak in pasterns.**

Hindquarters :

- **Over angulated or too straight angulation.**
- **Close behind or spread hocks.**

Feet :

- **Tendency to broad, round, thick feet; cat feet, flat feet;** spread toes.

Coat :

- Colour : Flecks **on the body of another shade** than the ground colour.

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS :

- **Aggressive or overly shy.**
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.

Teeth :

- Overshot or undershot mouth.
- Wry mouth.
- Lack of one incisor, one canine, one carnassial tooth (PM4-upper jaw – M1-lower jaw), lack of more than 4 teeth (any four teeth).
- Faulty position of one or both canines of the lower jaw which, when the mouth is shut, can damage the upper gums or the palate.

Eye :

- Wall eye.

Tail :

- Corkscrew tail, broken tail (fused vertebrae), docked, even partially.

Hindquarters :

- Presence of dewclaws.

Colour :

- Brown (chocolate), Blue.

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.

The latest amendments are in bold characters.



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FCI-Standard No. 193 (Grp 10)
Fedcn 04 12 2016

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