



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.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Well boned, large, muscular and strongly built. Body slightly longer than height at withers. Majestic bearing, with noble expression.

CHARACTERISTICS

Some loose fitting skin over body and head permitted, not to be excessive.

TEMPERAMENT

Steady, devoted, loyal and vigilant. Slightly aloof.

HEAD AND SKULL

Head fairly large with broad short skull, broad across cheeks. Head proportion: skull length two thirds, to muzzle one third. Skull flat and parallel to topline of muzzle.

Definite stop, nose should not protrude beyond vertical line of muzzle. Nose large with well open nostrils. Lips fleshy and thick. The upper lips forms inverted 'v' when viewed from the front. Muzzle deep and square when viewed from the front, with deep flews. Head has loose skin permitted but without excess.

EYES

Clean eyes, set forward, well apart, rather rounded. Rims fairly tight without excessive haw. Rim pigmentation to tone with nose colour. Free from obvious eye problems.

EARS

Small for size of head, set forward, high and well apart. Triangular, hanging flat towards cheeks but not reaching beyond line of throat.

MOUTH

Scissor bite i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Or level bite. Teeth white and regular. Strong well developed jaws.

NECK

Fairly short, stocky, very muscular, dewlap from lower jaw reaching mid-point of neck.

FOREQUARTERS

Shoulder long, slightly sloping with well developed and definite muscle.

Elbows not too close to body to allow very free action. Pasterns slightly sloping, legs vertical when viewed from front.

BODY

Longer than height at withers. Broad, well muscled chest, ribcage reaching at least to elbow. Ribs long and well sprung. Topline straight, sloping slightly from the withers, line of belly parallel to topline.

HINDQUARTERS

Broad loin, well let into backline, slightly rounded with well developed muscle. Croup broad, muscular, with slight slope. Thighs long, broad, moderate stifle, powerful hocks. Dewclaws (single or double) removed.

FEET

Oval; close, arched toes. Pads thick, hard and dark coloured. Nails curved, strong and dark. Hindfeet slightly smaller than front.

TAIL

Previously customarily docked.

Docked: Customarily docked by 1/3 of length. Thick at root, set on slightly lower than topline. Tapering towards the tip. Never carried up or over back, but may be carried level with topline when moving.

Undocked: Thick at root, set on slightly lower than topline. Tapering towards the tip. Never carried up or over back but may be carried level with topline when moving. In overall balance with the rest of the dog.

[*refer note below]

GAIT/MOVEMENT

Slow, free, bear-like. Slow trot, long steps covering ground well. Rarely gallops.

COAT

Short, dense, even, fine, hard texture, with good sheen. No fringe.

COLOUR

Preferred black, blue, all shades of grey, brown varying from fawn to red. Brindling on either of the latter colours. Small star on chest and white on toes permissible. Pigmentation to tone with coat colours.

SIZE

Height: 65 - 75cm (25½ - 29½in); Weight: 50 - 70kg (110 - 154lb).

Some tolerance allowed. Bitches somewhat less.

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

NOTE

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

***Regardless of the provisions of the current KUSA-adopted standard, docked and 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.**
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Most recent changes to this Standard has an effective date of 01/01/2018

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