



BREED NAME: South African Mastiff®

ORIGIN: South Africa

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE STANDARD: 01/08/2019

UTILIZATION: Although the South African Mastiff® is a family companion it should always be ready and willing to protect its family.

KUSA-CLASSIFICATION: developing breed

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY: In the harsh, and often hostile country of South Africa, farm dogs (dogs of uncertain heritage, not pure bred or from any breed society) were kept as family dogs and were mostly developed for guarding the homestead. They were medium to large sized dogs with a mastiff like appearance. The first collective group of people to establish a breed association for these dogs formulated a breed standard in 1983 and SABBS (South African Boerboel Breeders Association) was born. Many splinter associations and societies later, the breed standard and interpretation warped to such an extent that many might say it no longer serves the purpose it was originally bred for. In order to achieve the objective of creating a working dog capable of protecting its family, the breed standard of the South African Mastiff® was determined, which relates to the physical constitution as well as the traits and characteristics.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: A large, impressive and powerful dog. Strong and muscular. The dog must look athletic and strong.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS: Depth of chest should be equal to the height at withers. Length of muzzle should be equal or a bit shorter than the length of head. Length of body: measured from point of shoulder to point of buttock should be equal to the height at withers.

BEHAVIOUR/TEMPERAMENT: The dog must be calm and well-balanced in terms of character, confident and self-assured, natural and good-natured as well as attentive and willing to please. The dog must possess instinctive behaviour, resilience and self-assurance in order to be suitable as a companion, guard and protection dog. Once introduced to visitors at home in its own territory, the dogs must behave calmly and not present any threat to the visitors. The dog must behave calmly and not present any threat to the judge or to any person or dog in public areas.

HEAD

CRANIAL REGION:

Skull: Blocky. Broad and flat between the ears with the width, depth and length being equal.

FACIAL REGION:

Nose: Black. Broad, with well opened nostrils when viewed from front, flat (not pointed or turned up) in profile.

Muzzle: The muzzle is short, broad and deep and well attached to the head. Keeping nearly parallel in width to end of nose, thus forming a right angle with upper line of face, of great depth from point of nose to under jaw. The muzzle should present square. The lower jaw is broad and square, showing no weakness.

Lips: Fleshy and loose, covering the lower lips and jaw, but should not hang lower than the lower jaw line. Strong pigmentation is preferred



Jaws/Teeth: Canine teeth healthy, powerful and wide apart. A complete set (42 teeth according to the dental formula) Scissors bite or reversed scissor bite but never so much as to become visible when mouth is closed. An overshot is a serious fault.

Cheeks: Muscles of temples and cheeks (temporal and masseter) well developed.

Eyes: Medium size, almond shaped, horizontally set and wide apart and not protruding. Colour light yellow to dark brown. Operative corrections are forbidden.

Ears: V-shaped, moderate thickness and medium sized ears. They are set high against the skull and drop sideways, close to the cheeks when in repose. When alert, the ears should form a straight line with the top of the skull.

NECK: Slightly arched, very muscular. A slight dewlap is acceptable. The skin is loose but smooth between the forelegs.

BODY:

Top line: Level and without interruption. A slightly higher hind quarters is acceptable when taking the musculature of the glutes in consideration.

Withers: The withers are well laid back with good muscle development and closely attached to the body.

Back: The back is wide, firm, strong, long and well-muscled. Ratio of length between back and loin is two thirds back and 1 third loin.

Loin: The loin is broad, strongly developed and well-muscled.

Croup: The croup should not droop or crouch and be the same height as the withers.

Chest: Measured from the withers to the brisket should be the same as from the elbow to the ground. Brisket extending below the elbow. The circumference of the ribcage would be in relation to 3:2 to the height of the dog measured at the withers. Well-sprung ribcage.

TAIL: The tail is set high and extends at least to the hock, but not beyond the middle of the hind pastern. Slightly longer hair on the tail is acceptable but not desired. The tail is carried hanging downward in a gentle curve, whereby in a state of excitement and in motion it is raised and carried higher with the end pointing upwards, but not over back. Operative corrections are forbidden.

LIMBS

FOREQUARTERS:

General appearance: Are straight when seen from all sides, and parallel when seen from the front without the elbows and feet turn neither in nor outwards. The front legs are set wide apart to allow maximum chest development. The pastern should be short, thick and slightly angled to the front when viewed from the front and side to allow for a dog to move purposefully and fluently.



Shoulder: The shoulders are well laid back with good muscle development and closely attached to the body.

Elbow: Elbows may not be turned out or pushed in. The forearms are straight when seen from all sides and muscled.

Forearm: Legs straight, strong and set wide apart, bones being large Metacarpus (Pastern): Paws should point straight forward with a slight turn in pastern. The pastern should be short, thick and slightly angled to the front when viewed from the front and side to allow for purposeful and fluent movement.

Forefeet: Rounded, well-closed and arched; the soles are hard but not brittle. The nails are strong, short and of dark colour.

HINDQUARTERS:

General appearance: The hindquarters should be powerful and well angulated to enhance effective propulsion. Strength in hindquarters is of paramount importance, cow hocks in mature adults is unacceptable. The legs are strong and well-muscled.

Thigh: The upper and second thigh is well developed with prominent musculature.

Lower thigh: Well developed.

Hock joint: Hocks bent, wide apart, and quite squarely set when standing or walking. The hocks are strongly developed and firm, it is thick and short and bends slightly forward to support the weight of the dog.

Metatarsus (Rear pastern): The hind pastern stands vertically under the hock.

Hind feet: Rounded, well-closed and arched; the soles are hard but not brittle. The nails are strong, short and of dark colour.

GAIT / MOVEMENT: The movement should be powerful with easy extension and purposeful. Driven from the rear, fluent, sound, with ground-covering strides. Level top line maintained whilst on the move with only slight sideways movement. The gait should be long with a high knee action. Any tendency towards over-angulation of the hindquarters reduces the stability and the stamina, and thereby the working ability of the dog.

SKIN: The skin is thick and (loosely) fitting. Dark pigmentation is preferred. White pigmentation is acceptable, but pink is undesirable.

COAT:

Hair: Short and close lying. Long hair is not acceptable.

Colour: Red brindle, fawn brindle, piebald brindle, red, brown, fawn, Irish Spotted, Piebald and extreme Piebald. White is acceptable but subject to a healthy skin, good pigmentation, black nose and eye rims. The colour black is not allowed.

Strong masks where the black reaches the eyes and beyond is preferred. Masks are classified as strong, medium, slight or none. Where no mask is present the nose must be black.



SIZE AND WEIGHT:

Male dogs:

Ideal height at withers: 70cm – 75cm(29.5in)

Ideal weight: 70kg – 75kg(165.3lb)

Female dogs:

Ideal height at withers: 65cm – 71cm(28in)

Ideal weight: 65kg – 71kg(156.5lb)

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

SEVERE FAULTS

Faults listed should be in degree of seriousness.

Deviations from the above-described breed characteristics which impair the working capability.

DISQUALIFYING FAULTS

- **Aggressive or overly shy dogs**
- **Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.**
- **Untypical specimen.**
- **Faults which prohibit a dog from winning any award at dog shows; wrong type of bite;**
Unacceptable colour; over or undersized, etc.
- **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**

