

AKITA

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 01/01/2020

ORIGIN

Japan.

UTILISATION

Companion dog.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Originally, Japanese dogs were small to medium in size and no large breeds existed. Since 1603 in the Akita region, Akita Matagis (medium-sized bear-hunting dogs) were used as fighting dogs. From 1868 Akita Matagis were crossed with Tosas and Mastiffs. Consequently, the size of this breed increased, but characteristics associated with Spitz type were lost. In 1908 dog fighting was prohibited, but this breed was nevertheless preserved and improved as a large Japanese breed. As a result, nine superior examples of this breed were designated as "Natural Monuments" in 1931. During World War II (1939-1945), it was common to use dogs as a source of fur for military garments. The police ordered the capture and confiscation of all dogs other than German Shepherd Dogs used for military purposes. Some fanciers tried to circumvent the order by crossbreeding their dogs with German Shepherd Dogs. When World War II ended, Akitas had been drastically reduced in number and existed as many different types and lines. This created a very confusing situation in the breed during the restoration process of the pure breed after the war. The most influential were the Dewa and Ichinoseki lines. However, sensible learned fanciers did not approve of these types as a proper Japanese breed, so they made efforts to eliminate the old strains by crossbreeding for the purpose of restoring the original pure breed. They succeeded in stabilising the pure strain of a large-sized breed as is known today.



Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Large-sized dog, sturdily built, well-balanced and with much substance; secondary sex characteristics strongly marked, with high nobility and dignity in modesty; constitution tough.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

The ratio of height at withers to length of body (from the point of the shoulders to the point of the buttock) is 10 : 11, but the body is slightly longer in bitches than in dogs.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

The temperament is composed, faithful, docile, and receptive.

HEAD

Cranial Region:

Skull: The size is in proportion to the body. The forehead is broad, with distinct furrow. No wrinkle.

Stop: Defined.

Facial Region:

Nose: Large and black. Slight and diffuse lack of pigment accepted in white dogs only, but black is always preferred.

Muzzle: Moderately long and strong, with broad base; tapering, but not pointed. Nasal bridge straight.

Lips: Tight.

Cheeks: Moderately developed.

Jaws and teeth: Teeth strong with scissor bite.

Eyes:

Relatively small, almost triangular in shape due to the rising of the outer eye corner, set moderately apart, dark brown: the darker, the better.

Ears:

Relatively small, thick, triangular, slightly rounded at tips, set moderately apart, pricked, and inclining forward.

NECK

Thick and muscular, without dewlap, in balance with head.

BODY

Back: Straight and strong.

Loin: Broad and muscular.

Croup: Oblique

Chest: Deep, forechest well-developed, ribs moderately well sprung.

Underline and belly: Well drawn up.

TAIL

Set on high, thick, carried vigorously curled over back; the tip nearly reaching hocks when let down.

LIMBS

Forequarters:

Shoulder: Moderately sloping and developed.

Elbow: Tight.

Forearm: Straight and heavy-boned.

Carpus (wrist): Strong

Metacarpus (pastern): Short

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Well-developed, strong, and moderately angulated.

FEET

Thick, round, arched, and tight.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

Resilient and powerful movement.

COAT

Outer coat harsh and straight, undercoat soft and dense; the withers and the rump are covered with slightly longer hair; the hair on tail is longer than on the rest of the body.

COLOUR

- Red fawn, sesame (red fawn hairs with black tips), brindle, and white.

* All the above mentioned colours, except white, must have "urajiro".

- (**Urajiro** = whitish coat on the sides of the muzzle, on the cheeks, on the underside of jaw, neck, chest, body and tail and on the inside of the legs).

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 67cm (approx. 26").

Females: 61cm (approx. 24").

There is a tolerance of 3cm more or less.

***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.*

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.

- Bitchy dogs / doggy bitches.
- Undershot or overshot mouth.

- Missing teeth.
- Blue- or black-spotted tongue.
- Iris light in colour.
- Short tail.
- Shyness.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Ears not pricked.
- Hanging tail.
- Long hair (shaggy).
- Black mask.
- Markings on white ground.

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FCI Standard No 2556: AKITA

FCI Classification: Group 5: Spitz and Primitive types

Section 5.3. Asian Spitz and related breeds

Without Working Trial