KUSA

Kennel Union of Southern Africa

ROTTWEILER

A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However, if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as unacceptable, it must not be rewarded in the show ring.

Most recent changes to this Standard have an effective date of 01/01/2022

ORIGIN

Germany.

UTILISATION

Companion, service, and working dog.

Illustration courtesy of NKU Picture Library

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Rottweiler is considered to be one of the oldest dog breeds. Its origin goes back to Roman times. These dogs were kept as herder or driving dogs. They marched over the Alps with the Roman legions, protecting the humans and driving their cattle. In the region of Rottweil, these dogs met and mixed with the native dogs in a natural crossing. The main task of the Rottweiler, then, became the driving and guarding of the herds of cattle and the defense of their masters and their property. This breed acquired its name from the old free city of Rottweil and was known as the "Rottweil butcher's dog". The butchers bred this type of dog purely for performance and usefulness. In due course, a first rate watch- and driving dog evolved, which could also be used as a draught dog. When, at the beginning of the 20th century, various breeds were needed for police service, the Rottweiler was amongst those tested. It soon became evident that the breed was highly suitable for the tasks set by police service, and therefore they were officially recognised as Police Dogs in 1910. Rottweiler breeders aim at a dog of abundant strength, black-coated, with clearly defined rich tan markings, whose powerful appearance does not lack nobility, and which is exceptionally well suited to being a companion, service, rescue and working dog.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Rottweiler is a medium to large size, stalwart dog, neither heavy nor light, and neither leggy nor weedy. His correctly proportioned, compact, and powerful build leads to the conclusion of great strength, agility, and endurance.

IMPORTANT PROPORTIONS

The length of the body, measured from the point of the sternum (breastbone) to the ischiatic tuberosity *[ed. point of buttock]*, should not exceed the height at the withers by, at most, 15%.

BEHAVIOUR / TEMPERAMENT

The Rottweiler is good-natured, placid in basic disposition, very devoted, obedient, biddable, and eager to work. His appearance is natural and rustic, his behaviour self-assured, steady and fearless. He reacts to his surroundings with great alertness and, at the same time, is even-tempered.

HEAD

Cranial Region:

Skull: Of medium length, relatively broad between the ears. Forehead line moderately arched as seen from the side. Occipital bone well-developed without being conspicuous.

Stop: Stop relatively strong. Frontal groove not too deep.

Facial Region:

Nose: Well-developed, broader than round, with relatively large nostrils, always black.

Muzzle: The foreface should appear neither elongated nor shortened in relation to the cranial region. The ratio between the length of the muzzle and the length of the skull is about 1 : 1,5. Straight nasal bridge, broad at base,

moderately tapered.
Lips: Black, close-fitting, corner of the mouth not visible, gum as dark as possible.
Cheeks: Zygomatic arches pronounced.
Jaws and teeth: Upper and lower jaw strong and broad. Strong, complete dentition (42 teeth) with scissor bite, the upper incisors closely overlapping the lower incisors.

Eyes:

Of medium size, almond-shaped, dark brown in colour. Eyelids close-fitting.

Ears:

Medium-sized, pendant, triangular, wide apart, set on high. With the ears laid forward close to the head, the skull appears to be broadened.

NECK

Strong, of fair length, well-muscled, slightly arched, clean, free from throatiness, without excessive dewlap.

BODY

***Back*:** Straight, strong, firm.
***Loin*:** Short, strong, and deep.
***Croup*:** Broad, of medium length, slightly rounded. Neither flat nor falling away.
***Chest*:** Roomy, broad, and deep (approximately 50% of the shoulder height) with well-developed forechest and well-sprung ribs.
***Underline and belly*:** Flanks not tucked-up.

TAIL

[ed. previously docked]
In natural condition, strong, level in extension of the upper line; while paying attention, when excited, or while moving, it can be carried upward in a light curve; at ease may be hanging. While positioned along the leg, the tail reaches approximately to the hocks or is a bit longer.
[*refer notes below]

LIMBS

Forequarters:

General appearance: Seen from the front, the front legs are straight and not placed too closely to each other. The forearm, seen from the side, stands straight and vertical. The slope of the shoulder blade is about 45º to the horizontal.
Shoulder: Well laid back.
Upper arm: Close-fitting to the body.
Forearm: Strongly developed and muscular.
Carpus (wrist): Strong
Metacarpus (pastern): Slightly springy, strong, not steep.

Hindquarters:

General appearance: Seen from behind, legs straight and not too close together. When standing free, obtuse angles are formed between the dog's upper thigh and the hip bone, the upper thigh and the lower thigh, and the lower thigh and metatarsals.
Upper thigh: Moderately long, broad, and strongly muscled.
Lower thigh: Long, strongly and broadly muscled, sinewy.
Hock joint: Sturdy, well-angulated hocks; not steep.

FEET

Forefeet:

Round, tight and well-arched; pads hard; nails short, black, and strong.

Hind feet:

Slightly longer than the front feet. Toes strong, arched, as tight as front feet.

GAIT / MOVEMENT

The Rottweiler is a trotting dog. In movement, the back remains firm and relatively stable. Movement harmonious, steady, full of energy, and unrestricted, with good stride.

SKIN

Skin on the head: overall tight-fitting. When the dog is alert, the forehead may be slightly wrinkled.

COAT

The coat consists of a topcoat and an undercoat. The topcoat is of medium length, coarse, dense, and flat. The undercoat must not show through the topcoat. The hair is a little longer on the hind legs.

COLOUR

- Black

* With clearly defined markings of a rich tan on the cheeks, muzzle, throat, chest, and legs, as well as over both eyes, and under the base of the tail.

SIZE

Height at withers:

Males: 61cm – 68cm (approx. 24" – 27)
(61cm – 62cm is small; 63cm – 64cm is medium height; 65cm – 66cm is large / correct height; 67cm – 68cm very large).
Females: 56cm – 63cm (approx. 22" – 25").
(56cm – 57cm is small; 58cm – 59cm medium height; 60cm – 61cm is large / correct height; 62cm – 63cm very large).

Weight: Approximately 42kg.

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.**

***The above rider is only applicable to dogs born before 1 January 2022**

***The decision to exclude dogs born after 1 January 2022 from the docking concession was taken by the Federal Council on the basis that this step towards ultimately phasing out tail-docking in the breed in line with the practice in the country of origin was petitioned by the Rottweiler Breed Council, representing all Specialist Rottweiler Clubs in South Africa.**

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.

- General appearance: Light, weedy, leggy appearance. Light in bone and muscle.
- Head: Hound-type head. Narrow, light, too short, long, coarse or excessively molossoid head; excessively broad skull, (lack of stop, too little stop or too strong stop). Very deep frontal groove.
- Foreface: Long, pointed or too short muzzle (any muzzle shorter than 40% of the length of the head is too short); split nose; Roman nose (convex nasal bridge) or dish-faced (concave nasal bridge); aquiline nose; pale or spotted nose (butterfly nose).
- Lips: Pendulous, pink or patchy; corner of lips visible.
- Jaws: Narrow lower jaw.
- Bite: Pincer bite. Molars of the underjaw not standing in one line.
- Cheeks: Strongly protruding.
- Eyes: Light, deep set. Also too full and round eyes; loose eyelids
- Ears: Set on too low or too high, heavy, long, slack or turned backwards. Also flying ears or ears not carried symmetrically.
- Neck: Too long, thin, lacking muscle. Showing dewlap or throaty.
- Body: Too long, too short or too narrow.
- Back: Too long, weak; sway back, or roach back.
- Croup: Too sloping, too short, too flat or too long.
- Chest: Flat-ribbed or barrel-shaped. Too narrow behind.
- Tail: Set on too high or too low.
- Forequarters: Narrow, crooked, or not parallel-standing front legs. Steep shoulder placement. Loose or out at elbow. Too long, too short, or too straight in upper arm. Weak or steep pastern.
- Splayed feet. Too flat or too arched toes. Deformed toes. Light-coloured nails.
- Hindquarters: Flat thighs, hocks too close, cow-hocks or barrel-hocks. Joints with too little or too much angulation. Dewclaws.
- Skin: Wrinkles on head.

- Coat: Soft, too short or long. Wavy coat; lack of undercoat.
- Colour: Markings of incorrect colour, not clearly defined. Markings that are too spread out.

Severe faults:

- General appearance: Too-molossoid type and heavy general appearance.
- Skin: Skin at the head strongly wrinkled, strong wrinkles in the area of the forehead, the muzzle and the cheeks, strong dewlap.
- Gait: Sluggish action while trotting.

Disqualifying faults:

- Aggressive or overly shy.
- Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities.
- Behaviour: Anxious, shy, cowardly, gun-shy, vicious, excessively suspicious, nervous animals.
- General appearance: Distinct reversal of sexual type, i.e. feminine dogs or masculine bitches.
- Teeth: Overshot or undershot bite, wry mouth; lack of one incisor, one canine, one premolar, or one molar.
- Eyes: Entropion, ectropion, yellow eyes, different-coloured eyes.
- Tail: Kink-tail, ring-tail, with strong lateral deviation, natural bobtail.
- Hair: Definitely long or wavy coat.
- Colour: Dogs that do not show the typical Rottweiler colouring of black with tan markings. White markings.

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FCI Standard No 147: ROTTWEILER

FCI Classification: Group 2: Pinscher and Schnauzer, Molossoid type dogs, and Swiss Mountain and Cattle dogs
Section 2.1. Molossian breeds; Mastiff type
With Working Trial